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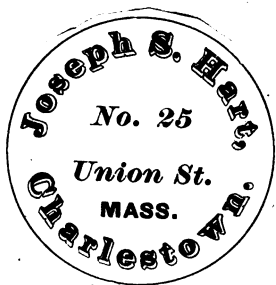
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M. H. White
[Irving, Washington]
A HISTORY

OF
NEW YORK,

FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD TO THE
END OF THE DUTCH DYNASTY.

CONTAINING

Among many Surprising and Curious Matters, the Unutterable
Ponderings of **WALTER THE DOUBTER**, the Disastrous
Projects of **WILLIAM THE TESTY**, and the Chivalric
Achievements of **PETER THE HEADSTRONG**, the three
Dutch Governors of **NEW AMSTERDAM**; being the only
Authentic History of the Times that ever hath been, or ever
will be Published.

BY **DIEDRICH KNICKERBOCKER**, *author*

*De waarheid die in duister lag,
Dit komt met klaarheid aan den dag.*

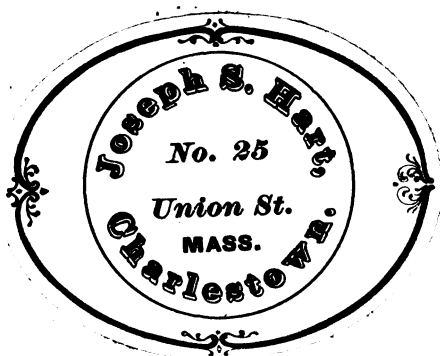
IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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THE HISTORY
OF
NEW YORK, &c.

BOOK V.

Containing the first part of the reign of Peter Stuyvesant and his troubles with the Amphyctionic Council.

CHAP. I.

In which the death of a great man is shewn to be no such inconsolable matter of sorrow—and how Peter Stuyvesant acquired a great name from the uncommon strength of his head.

¶ 1.

To a profound philosopher, like myself, who am apt to see clear through a subject, where the penetration of ordinary people extends but half way, there is no fact more simple and manifest, than that the death of a great man, is a matter of

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very little importance. Much as we think of ourselves, and much as we may excite the empty plaudits of the million, it is certain that the greatest among us do actually fill but an exceeding small space in the world; and it is equally certain, that even that small space is quickly supplied, when we leave it vacant. "Of what consequence is it," said the elegant Pliny, "that individuals appear, or make their exit? the world is a theatre whose scenes and actors are continually changing." Never did philosopher speak more correctly, and I only wonder, that so wise a remark could have existed so many ages, and mankind not have laid it more to heart. Sage follows on in the footsteps of sage; one hero just steps out of his triumphant car, to make way for the hero who comes after him; and of the proudest monarch it is merely said, that—"he slept with his fathers, and his successor reigned in his stead."

The world, to tell the private truth, cares but little for their loss, and if left to itself would soon forget to grieve; and though a nation has often been figuratively drowned in tears on the death of a great man, yet it is ten chances to one if an individual tear has been shed on the melancholy occasion, excepting from the forlorn pen of some hungry author. It is the historian, the biographer, and the poet, who have the whole burden of grief to sustain; who—unhappy varlets!—like undertakers in

England, act the part of chief mourners—who inflate a nation with sighs it never heaved, and deluge it with tears, it never dreamed of shedding. Thus while the patriotic author is weeping and howling, in prose, in blank verse, and in rhyme, and collecting the drops of public sorrow into his volume, as into a lachrymal vase, it is more than probable his fellow citizens are eating and drinking, fiddling and dancing; as utterly ignorant of the bitter lamentations made in their name, as are those men of straw, John, Doe, and Richard Roe, of the plaintiffs for whom they are generously pleased on divers occasions to become sureties.

‘The most glorious and praise-worthy hero that ever desolated nations, might have mouldered into oblivion among the rubbish of his own monument, did not some kind historian take him into favour, and benevolently transmit his name to posterity—and much as the valiant William Kieft worried, and bustled, and turmoiled, while he had the destinies of a whole colony in his hand, I question seriously, whether he will not be obliged to this authentic history, for all his future celebrity.

His exit occasioned no convulsion in the city of New Amsterdam, or its vicinity: the earth trembled not, neither did any stars shoot from their spheres—the heavens were not shrowded in black, as poets would fain persuade us they have been, on the unfortunate death of a hero—the rocks (hard

hearted vagabonds) melted not into tears ; nor did the trees hang their heads in silent sorrow ; and as to the sun, he laid abed the next night, just as long, and shewed as jolly a face when he arose, as he ever did on the same day of the month in any year, either before or since. The good people of New Amsterdam, one and all, declared that he had been a very busy, active, bustling little governor ; that he was “ the father of his country ”—that he was “ the noblest work of God ”—that “ he was a man, take him for all in all, they never should look upon his like again ”—together with sundry other civil and affectionate speeches that are regularly said on the death of all great men ; after which they smoked their pipes, thought no more about him, and Peter Stuyvesant succeeded to his station.

Peter Stuyvesant was the last, and like the renowned Wouter Van Twiller, he was also the best, of our ancient dutch governors. Wouter having surpassed all who preceded him ; and Pieter, or Piet, as he was sociably called by the old dutch burghers, who were ever prone to familiarize names, having never been equalled by any successor. He was in fact the very man fitted by nature to retrieve the desperate fortunes of her beloved province, had not the fates or *parcæ*, Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos, those most potent, immaculate and unrelenting of all ancient and immortal spinners, destined them to inextricable confusion.

To say merely that he was a hero would be doing him unparalleled injustice—he was in truth a combination of heroes—for he was of a sturdy, raw boned make like Ajax Telamon, so famous for his prowess in belabouring the little Trojans—with a pair of round shoulders, that Hercules would have given his hide for, (meaning his lion's hide) when he undertook to ease old Atlas of his load. He was moreover as Plutarch describes Coriolanus, not only terrible for the force of his arm, but likewise of his voice, which sounded as though it came out of a barrel; and like the self same warrior, he possessed a sovereign contempt for the sovereign people, and an iron aspect, which was enough of itself to make the very bowels of his adversaries quake with terror and dismay. All this martial excellency of appearance was inexpressibly heightened by an accidental advantage, with which I am surprised that neither Homer nor Virgil have graced any of their heroes, for it is worth all the paltry scars and wounds in the Iliad and Eneid, or Lucan's Pharsalia into the bargain. This was nothing less than a redoubtable wooden leg, which was the only prize he had gained, in bravely fighting the battles of his country; but of which he was so proud, that he was often heard to declare he valued it more than all his other limbs put together; indeed so highly did he esteem it, that he caused it to be gallantly enchased.

and relieved with silver devices, which caused it to be related in divers histories and legends that he wore a silver leg.*

Like that choleric warrior Achilles, he was somewhat subject to extempore bursts of passion, which were oft-times rather unpleasant to his favourites and attendants, whose perceptions he was apt to quicken, after the manner of his illustrious imitator, Peter the Great, by anointing their shoulders with his walking staff.

But the resemblance for which I most value him was that which he bore in many particulars to the renowned Charlemagne. Though I cannot find that he had read Plato, or Aristotle, or Hobbes, or Bacon, or Algernon Sydney, or Tom Paine, yet did he sometimes manifest a shrewdness and sagacity in his measures, that one would hardly expect from a man, who did not know Greek, and had never studied the ancients. True it is, and I confess it with sorrow, that he had an unreasonable aversion to experiments, and was fond of governing his province after the simplest manner—but then he contrived to keep it in better order than did the erudite Kieft, though he had all the philosophers ancient and modern, to assist and perplex him. I must likewise own that he made but very few laws, but then again he took care that

* See the histories of Masters Josselyn and Blome.

these few were rigidly and impartially enforced--and I do not know but justice on the whole, was as well administered, as if there had been volumes of sage acts and statutes yearly made, and daily neglected and forgotten.

He was in fact the very reverse of his predecessors, being neither tranquil and inert like Walter the Doubter, nor restless and fidgetting, like William the Tasty, but a man, or rather a governor, of such uncommon activity and decision of mind that he never sought or accepted the advice of others; depending confidently upon his single head, as did the heroes of yore upon their single arms, to work his way through all difficulties and dangers. To tell the simple truth he wanted no other requisite for a perfect statesman, than to think always right, for no one can deny that he always acted as he thought, and if he wanted in correctness he made up for it in perseverance—An excellent quality! since it is surely more dignified for a ruler to be persevering and consistent in error, than wavering and contradictory, in endeavouring to do what is right; this much is certain, and I generously make the maxim public, for the benefit of all legislators, both great and small, who stand shaking in the wind, without knowing which way to steer—a ruler who acts according to his own will is sure of pleasing himself, while he who seeks to consult the wishes and whims of others, runs a great risk of

pleasing nobody. The clock that stands still, and points resolutely in one direction, is certain of being right twice in the four and twenty hours—while others may keep going continually, and continually be going wrong.

Nor did this magnanimous virtue escape the discernment of the good people of Nieuw Nederlandts; on the contrary so high an opinion had they of the independent mind and vigorous intellects of their new governor, that they universally called him *Hard-koppig Piet*, or PETER THE HEAD-STRONG—a great compliment to his understanding!

If from all that I have said thou dost not gather, worthy reader, that Peter Stuyvesant was a tough, sturdy, valiant, weatherbeaten, mettlesome, leathernsided, lion hearted, generous spirited, obstinate, old “seventy six” of a governor, thou art a very numscull at drawing conclusions.

This most excellent governor, whose character I have thus attempted feebly to delineate, commenced his administration on the 29th of May 1647: a remarkably stormy day, distinguished in all the almanacks of the time, which have come down to us, by the name of *Windy Friday*. As he was very jealous of his personal and official dignity, he was inaugurated into office with great ceremony; the goodly oaken chair of the renowned Wouter Van Twiller, being carefully preserved for such occasions; in like manner as the chair and stone

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were reverentially preserved at Schone in Scotland, for the coronation of the caledonian monarchs.

I must not omit to mention that the tempestuous state of the elements, together with its being that unlucky day of the week, termed "hanging day," did not fail to excite much grave speculation, and divers very reasonable apprehensions, among the more ancient and enlightened inhabitants; and several of the sager sex, who were reputed to be not a little skilled in the science and mystery of astrology and fortune telling, did declare outright, that they were fearful omens of a disastrous administration—an event that came to be lamentably verified, and which proves, beyond dispute, the wisdom of attending to those preternatural intimations, furnished by dreams and visions, the flying of birds, falling of stones and cackling of geese, on which the sages and rulers of ancient times placed such judicious reliance—or to those shootings of stars, eclipses of the moon, howlings of dogs and flarings of candles, carefully noted and interpreted by the oracular old sybils of our day; who, in my humble opinion, are the legitimate possessors and preservers of the ancient science of divination. This much is certain, that governor Stuyvéssant succeeded to the chair of state, at a turbulent period; when foes thronged and threatened from without; when anarchy and stiff necked opposition reigned rampant within; and when the authority

of their high mightinesses the lords states general, though founded on the broad dutch bottom of unoffending imbecility; though supported by economy, and defended by speeches, protests, proclamations, flagstaffs, trumpeters and windmills—vacillated, oscillated, tottered, tumbled and was finally prostrated in the dirt, by british invaders, in much the same manner that our majestic, stupendous, but ricketty shingle steeples, will some day or other be toppled about our ears by a brisk north wester.

CHAP. II.

Shewing how Peter the Headstrong bestirred himself among the rats and cobwebs on entering into office—And the perilous mistake he was guilty of, in his dealings with the Amphycions.

THE very first movements of the great Peter, on taking the reins of government, displayed the magnanimity of his mind, though they occasioned not a little marvel and uneasiness among the people of the Manhattoes. Finding himself constantly interrupted by the opposition and annoyed by the sage advice of his privy council, the members of which had acquired the unreasonable habit of thinking and speaking for themselves during the preceding reign; he determined at once to put a stop to such a grievous abomination. Scarcely therefore had he entered upon his authority than he kicked out of office all those meddlesome spirits that composed the factious cabinet of William the Testy, in place of whom he chose unto himself councillors from those fat, somniferous, respectable families, that had flourished and slumbered under the easy reign of Walter the Doubter. All these he caused to be furnished with abundance of fair long pipes, and to be regaled with frequent corporation dinners, admonishing them to smoke and eat and sleep for the

good of the nation, while he took all the burden of government upon his own shoulders—an arrangement to which they all gave a hearty grunt of acquiescence.

Nor did he stop here, but made a hideous rout among the ingenious inventions and expedients of his learned predecessor—demolishing his flag-staffs and wind-mills, which like mighty giants, guarded the ramparts of New Amsterdam—pitching to the duyvel whole batteries of quaker guns—rooting up his patent gallows, where caitiff vagabonds were suspended by the breech, and in a word, turning topsy-turvy the whole philosophic, economic and wind-mill system of the immortal sage of Saardam.

The honest folk of New Amsterdam, began to quake now for the fate of their matchless champion Antony the trumpeter, who had acquired prodigious favour in the eyes of the women by means of his whiskers and his trumpet. Him did Peter the Headstrong, cause to be brought into his presence, and eyeing him for a moment from head to foot, with a countenance that would have appalled any thing else than a sounder of brass—"Pry-thee who and what art thou?" said he.—"Sire," replied the other in no wise dismayed,—“for my name, it is Antony Van Corlear—for my parentage, I am the son of my mother—for my profes-

sion I am champion and-garrison of this great city of New Amsterdam."---"I doubt me much," said Peter Stuyvesant," that thou art some scurvy costard-monger knave—how didst thou acquire this paramount honour and dignity?"—"Marry sir," replied the other, "like many a great man before me, simply *by sounding my own trumpet*."—"Aye, is it so?" quoth the governor, why then let us have a relish of thy art." Whereupon he put his instrument to his lips and sounded a charge, with such a tremendous outset, such a delectable quaver, and such a triumphant cadence that it was enough to make your heart leap out of your mouth only to be within a mile of it. Like as a war-worn charger, while sporting in peaceful plains, if by chance he hears the strains of martial music, pricks up his ears, and snorts and paws and kindles at the noise, so did the heroic soul of the mighty Peter joy to hear the clangour of the trumpet; for of him might truly be said what was recorded of the renowned St. George of England, "there was nothing in all the world that more rejoiced his heart, than to hear the pleasant sound of war, and see the soldiers brandish forth their steeled weapons." Casting his eyes more kindly therefore, upon the sturdy Van Corlear, and finding him to be a jolly, fat little man, shrewd in his discourse, yet of great discretion and immeasurable wind, he straightway

conceived an astonishing kindness for him; and discharging him from the troublesome duty of garrisoning, defending and alarming the city, ever after retained him about his person, as his chief favourite, confidential envoy and trusty squire. Instead of disturbing the city with disastrous notes, he was instructed to play so as to delight the governor, while at his repasts, as did the minstrels of yore in the days of glorious chivalry—and on all public occasions, to rejoice the ears of the people with warlike melody—thereby keeping alive a noble and martial spirit.

Many other alterations and reformatations, both for the better and for the worse, did the governor make, of which my time will not serve me to record the particulars, suffice it to say, he soon contrived to make the province feel that he was its master, and treated the sovereign people with such tyrannical rigour, that they were all fain to hold their tongues, stay at home and attend to their business; insomuch that party feuds and distinctions were almost forgotten, and many thriving keepers of taverns and dram-shops, were utterly ruined for want of business.

Indeed the critical state of public affairs at this time, demanded the utmost vigilance, and promptitude. The formidable council of the Amphyctions, which had caused so much tribulation to the un-

fortunate Kieft, still continued augmenting its forces, and threatened to link within its union, all the mighty principalities and powers of the east. In the very year following the inauguration of governor Stuyvesant a grand deputation departed from the city of Providence (famous for its dusty streets, and beauteous women,) in behalf of the puissant plantation of Rhode Island, praying to be admitted into the league.

The following mention is made of this application in the records still extant, of that assemblage of worthies.*

“ Mr. Will Cottington and captain Partridg of Rhode Iland presented this insewing request to the commissioners in wrighting——

“ Our request and motion is in behalfe of Rhoode Iland, that wee the Ilanders of Rhoode Iland may be rescaued into combination with all the united colonies of New England in a firme and perpetuall league of friendship and amity of offence and defence, mutuall advice and succor upon all just occasions for our mutuall safety and well-faire, &c.

Will Cottington,
Alicxsander Partridg.”

* Haz. Col. Stat. pap.

I confess the very sight of this fearful document, made me to quake for the safety of my beloved province. The name of Alexander, however misspelt, has been warlike in every age, and though its fierceness is in some measure softened by being coupled with the gentle cognomen of Partridge, still, like the colour of scarlet, it bears an exceeding great resemblance to the sound of a trumpet. From the style of the letter, moreover, and the soldierlike ignorance of orthography displayed by the noble captain Alicxsander Partridg in spelling his own name, we may picture to ourselves this mighty man of Rhodes like a second Ajax, strong in arms, great in the field, but in other respects, (meaning to disparagement) as great a dom cop, as if he had been educated among that learned people of Thrace, who Aristotle most slanderously assures us, could not count beyond the number four.

But whatever might be the threatening aspect of this famous confederation, Peter Stuyvesant was not a man to be kept in a state of incertitude and vague apprehension; he liked nothing so much as to meet danger face to face, and take it by the beard. Determined therefore to put an end to all these petty maraudings on the borders, he wrote two or three categorical letters to the grand council, which though neither couched in bad latin, nor yet graced by rhetorical tropes about wolfs and lambs,

and beetle flies, yet had more effect than all the elaborate epistles, protests and proclamations of his learned predecessor, put together. In consequence of his urgent propositions, the sage council of the amphyctions agreed to enter into a final adjustment of grievances and settlement of boundaries, to the end that a perpetual and happy peace might take place between the two powers. For this purpose governor Stuyvesant deputed two ambassadors, to negotiate with commissioners from the grand council of the league, and a treaty was solemnly concluded at Hartford. On receiving intelligence of this event, the whole community was in an uproar of exultation. The trumpet of the sturdy Van Corlear, sounded all day with joyful clangour from the ramparts of Fort Amsterdam, and at night the city was magnificently illuminated with two hundred and fifty tallow candles; besides a barrel of tar, which was burnt before the governor's house, on the cheering aspect of public affairs.

And now my worthy, but simple reader, is doubtless, like the great and good Peter, congratulating himself with the idea, that his feelings will no longer be molested by afflicting details of stolen horses, broken heads, impounded hogs, and all the other catalogue of heart-rending cruelties, that disgraced these border wars. But if my reader should indulge in such expectations, it is only another proof,

among the many he has already given in the course of this work, of his utter ignorance of state affairs—and this lamentable ignorance on his part, obliges me to enter into a very profound dissertation, to which I call his attention in the next chapter—wherein I will shew that Peter Stuyvesant has already committed a great error in politics; and by effecting a peace, has materially jeopardized the tranquility of the province.

CHAP. III.

Containing divers philosophical speculations on war and negotiations—and shewing that a treaty of peace is a great national evil.

It was the opinion of that poetical philosopher Lucretius, that war was the original state of man; whom he described as being primitively a savage beast of prey, engaged in a constant state of hostility with his own species, and that this ferocious spirit was tamed and ameliorated by society. The same opinion has been advocated by the learned Hobbes, nor have there been wanting a host of sage philosophers to admit and defend it.

For my part, I am prodigiously fond of these valuable speculations so complimentary to human nature, and which are so ingeniously calculated to make beasts of both writer and reader; but in this instance I am inclined to take the proposition by halves, believing with old Horace,* that though war may have been originally the favourite amusement and industrious employment of our progenitors, yet like many other excellent habits, so far

* Quum prorepserunt primis animalia terris,
Mutum ac turpe pecus, glandem atque cubilia propter,
Unguibus et pugnīs, dein fustibus, atque ita porro
Pugnabant armis, quæ post fabricaverat usus.

Hor. Sat. L. i. S. 3.

from being ameliorated, it has been cultivated and confirmed by refinement and civilization, and increases in exact proportion as we approach towards that state of perfection, which is the *ne plus ultra* of modern philosophy.

The first conflict between man and man was the mere exertion of physical force, unaided by auxiliary weapons—his arm was his buckler, his fist was his mace, and a broken head the catastrophe of his encounters. The battle of unassisted strength, was succeeded by the more rugged one of stones and clubs, and war assumed a sanguinary aspect. As man advanced in refinement, as his faculties expanded, and his sensibilities became more exquisite, he grew rapidly more ingenious and experienced, in the art of murdering his fellow beings. He invented a thousand devices to defend and to assault—the helmet, the cuirass and the buckler; the sword, the dart and the javelin, prepared him to elude the wound, as well as to launch the blow. Still urging on, in the brilliant and philanthropic career of invention, he enlarges and heightens his powers of defence and injury—The *Artes*, the *Scorpio*, the *Balista* and the *Catapulta*, give a horror and sublimity to war, and magnify its glory, by encreasing its desolation. Still insatiable; though armed with machinery that seemed to reach the limits of destructive invention, and to yield a power of injury, commensurate, even to the desires of

revenge—still deeper researches must be made in the diabolical arcana. With furious zeal he dives into the bowels of the earth; he toils midst poisonous minerals and deadly salts—the sublime discovery of gunpowder, blazes upon the world—and finally the dreadful art of fighting by proclamation, seems to endow the demon of war, with ubiquity and omnipotence!

By the hand of my body but this is grand!—this indeed marks the powers of mind, and bespeaks that divine endowment of reason, which distinguishes us from the animals, our inferiors. The unenlightened brutes content themselves with the native force which providence has assigned them. The angry bull butts with his horns, as did his progenitors before him—the lion, the leopard, and the tyger, seek only with their talons and their fangs, to gratify their sanguinary fury; and even the subtle serpent darts the same venom, and uses the same wiles, as did his sire before the flood. Man alone, blessed with the inventive mind, goes on from discovery to discovery—enlarges and multiplies his powers of destruction; arrogates the tremendous weapons of deity itself, and tasks creation to assist him, in murdering his brother worm!

In proportion as the art of war has increased in improvement, has the art of preserving peace advanced in equal ratio. But as I have already been very prolix to but little purpose, in the first part of

this truly philosophic chapter, I shall not fatigue my patient, but unlearned reader, in tracing the history of the art of making peace. Suffice it to say, as we have discovered in this age of wonders and inventions, that proclamation is the most formidable engine in war, so have we discovered the no less ingenious mode of maintaining peace by perpetual negotiations.

A treaty, or to speak more correctly a negotiation, therefore, according to the acceptation of your experienced statesmen, learned in these matters, is no longer an attempt to accommodate differences, to ascertain rights, and to establish an equitable exchange of kind offices ; but a contest of skill between two powers, which shall over-reach and take in the other. It is a cunning endeavour to obtain by peaceful manœuvre, and the chicanery of cabinets, those advantages, which a nation would otherwise have wrested by force of arms.—In the same manner that a conscientious highway-man reforms and becomes an excellent and praiseworthy citizen contenting himself with cheating his neighbour out of that property he would formerly have seized with open violence.

In fact the only time when two nations can be said to be in a state of perfect amity, is when a negotiation is open, and a treaty pending. Then as there are no stipulations entered into, no bonds to

restrain the will, no specific limits to awaken that captious jealousy of right implanted in our nature, as both parties have some advantage to hope and expect from the other, then it is that the two nations are as gracious and friendly to each other, as two rogues making a bargain. Their ministers professing the highest mutual regard, exchanging billets-doux, making fine speeches and indulging in all those little diplomatic flirtations, coquetries and fondlings, that do so marvelously tickle the good humour of the respective nations. Thus it may paradoxically be said, that there is never so good an understanding between two nations, as when there is a little misunderstanding—and that so long as they are on no terms, they are on the best terms in the world!

As I am of all men in the world, particularly historians, the most candid and unassuming, I would not for an instant claim the merit of having made the above political discovery. It has in fact long been secretly acted upon by certain enlightened cabinets, and is, together with divers other notable theories, privately copied out of the common place book of an illustrious gentleman, who has been member of congress, and enjoyed the unlimited confidence of heads of department. To this principle may be ascribed the wonderful ingenuity that has been shewn of late years in protracting and interrupting negociations.—Hence the cunning measure

of appointing as ambassador, some political pettifogger skilled in delays, sophisms, and misconstructions, and dexterous in the art of baffling argument—or some blundering statesman, whose stupid errors and misconstructions may be a plea for refusing to ratify his engagements. And hence too that most notable expedient, so popular with our government, of sending out a brace of ambassadors; who having each an individual will to consult, character to establish, and interest to promote, you may as well look for unanimity and concord between them, as between two lovers with one mistress, two dogs with one bone, or two naked rogues and one pair of breeches. This disagreement therefore is continually breeding delays and impediments, in consequence of which the negociation goes on swimmingly—inasmuch as there is no prospect of its ever coming to a close. Nothing is lost by these delays and obstacles but *time*, and in a negociation, according to the theory I have exposed, all time lost, is in reality so much time gained—with what delightful paradoxes, does the modern arcana of political economy abound!

Now all that I have here advanced is so notoriously true, that I almost blush to take up the time of my readers, with treating of matters which must many a time have stared them in the face. But the proposition to which I would most earnestly call their attention is this, that though a negociation

is the most harmonizing of all national transactions, yet a treaty of peace is a great political evil and one of the most fruitful sources of war.

I have rarely seen an instance in my time, of any special contract between individuals, that did not produce jealousies, bickerings, and often downright ruptures between them ; nor did I ever know of a treaty between two nations, that did not keep them continually in hot water. How many worthy country neighbours have I known, who after living in peace and good fellowship for years, have been thrown into a state of distrust, cavilling and animosity, by some ill starred agreement about fences, runs of water, and stray cattle. And how many well meaning nations, who would otherwise have remained in the most amiable disposition towards each other, have been brought to loggerheads about the infringement, or misconstruction of some treaty, which in an evil hour they had constructed by way of making their amity more sure.

Treaties at best are but complied with so long as interest requires their fulfillment ; consequently they are virtually binding on the weaker party only, or in other words, they are not really binding at all. No nation will wantonly go to war with another if it has nothing to gain thereby, and therefore needs no treaty to restrain it from violence ; and if it has any thing to gain, I much question, from what I have witnessed of the righteous conduct of nations,

whether any treaty could be made so strong, that it could not thrust the sword through—nay I would hold ten to one, the treaty itself, would be the very source to which resort would be had, to find a pretext for hostilities.

Thus therefore I sagely conclude—that though it is the best of all policies for a nation to keep up a constant negociation with its neighbours, it is the utmost summit of folly, for it ever to be beguiled into a treaty ; for then comes on the non-fulfilment and infraction, then remonstrance, then altercation, then retaliation, then recrimination and finally open war. In a word, negociation is like courtship, a time of sweet words, gallant speeches, soft looks and endearing caresses, but the marriage ceremony is the signal for hostilities—and thus ends this very abstruse though very instructive chapter.

CHAP. IV.

How Peter Stuyvesant was horribly belied by his adversaries the Moss Troopers—and his conduct thereupon.

IF my pains-taking reader, whose perception, it is a hundred to one, is as obtuse as a beetle's, is not somewhat perplexed, in the course of the ratiocination of my last chapter; he will doubtless, at one glance perceive, that the great Peter, in concluding a treaty with his eastern neighbours, was guilty of a most notable error and heterodoxy in politics. To this unlucky agreement may justly be ascribed a world of little infringements, altercations, negotiations and bickerings, which afterwards took place between the irreproachable Stuyvesant, and the evil disposed council of amphyctions; in all which, with the impartial justice of an historian, I pronounce the latter to have been invariably in the wrong. All these did not a little disturb the constitutional serenity of the good and substantial burghers of Mannahata—otherwise called Manhattoes, but more vulgarly known by the name of Manhattan. But in sooth they were so very scurvy and pitiful in their nature and effects, that a grave historian like me, who grudges the time spent in any thing less than recording the fall of empires,

and the revolution of worlds, would think them unworthy to be recorded in his sacred page.

The reader is therefore to take it for granted, though I scorn to waste in the detail, that time, which my furrowed brow and trembling hand, inform me is invaluable, that all the while the great Peter was occupied in those tremendous and bloody contests, that I shall shortly rehearse, there was a continued series of little, dirty, snivelling, pettifogging skirmishes, scourings, broils and maraudings made on the eastern frontiers, by the notorious moss troopers of Connecticut. But like that mirror of chivalry, the sage and valourous Don Quixote, I leave these petty contests for some future Sancho Panza of an historian, while I reserve my prowess and my pen for achievements of higher dignity.

Now did the great Peter conclude, that his labours had come to a close in the east, and that he had nothing to do but apply himself to the internal prosperity of his beloved Manhattoes. Though a man of great modesty, he could not help boasting that he had at length shut the temple of Janus, and that, were all rulers like a certain person who should be nameless, it would never be opened again. But the exultation of the worthy governor was put to a speedy check, for scarce was the treaty concluded, and hardly was the ink dried on the paper, before the crafty and discourteous council of the league

sought a new pretence for reilluminating the flames of discord.

In the year 1651, with a flagitious hardihood that makes my gorge to rise while I write, they accused the immaculate Peter—the soul of honour and heart of steel—that by divers gifts and promises he had been secretly endeavouring to instigate the Narrohigansett (or Narraganset) Mohague and Pequot Indians, to surprize and massacre the English settlements. For, as the council maliciously observed, “the Indians round about for divers hundred miles cercute, seeme to have drunke deep of an intoxicating cupp, att or from the Monhatoes against the English, whoe have sought there good, both in bodily and sperituall respects.” To support their most unrighteous accusation, they examined divers Indians, who all swore to the fact as sturdily as if they had been so many christian troopers. And to be more suré of their veracity, the knowing council previously made every mother’s son of them devoutly drunk, remembering the old proverb—*In vino veritas*.

Though descended from a family which suffered much injury from the losel Yankees of those times; my great grandfather having had a yoke of oxen and his best pacer stolen, and having received a pair of black eyes and a bloody nose, in one of these border wars; and my grandfather, when a very little boy tending the pigs, having been kid-

napped and severely flogged by a long sided Connecticut schoolmaster—Yet I should have passed over all these wrongs with forgiveness and oblivion—I could even have suffered them to have broken Evert Ducking's head, to have kicked the doughty Jacobus Van Curlet and his ragged regiment out of doors, carried every hog into captivity, and depopulated every hen roost, on the face of the earth with perfect impunity—But this wanton, wicked and unparalleled attack, upon one of the most gallant and irreproachable heroes of modern times, is too much even for me to digest, and has overset, with a single puff, the patience of the historian and the forbearance of the Dutchman.

Oh reader it was false!—I swear to thee it was false!—if thou hast any respect for my word—if the undeviating and unimpeached character for veracity, which I have hitherto borne throughout this work, has its due weight with thee, thou wilt not give thy faith to this tale of slander; for I pledge my honour and my immortal fame to thee, that the gallant Peter Stuyvesant, was not only innocent of this foul conspiracy, but would have suffered his right arm, or even his wooden leg to consume with slow and everlasting flames, rather than attempt to destroy his enemies in any other way, than open generous warfare—Beshrew those caitiff scouts, that conspired to sully his honest name by such an imputation!

Peter Stuyvesant, though he perhaps had never heard of a Knight Errant; yet had he as true a heart of chivalry as ever beat at the round table of King Arthur. There was a spirit of native gallantry, a noble and generous hardihood diffused through his rugged manners, which altogether gave unquestionable tokens of an heroic mind. He was, in truth, a hero of chivalry struck off by the hand of nature at a single heat, and though she had taken no further care to polish and refine her workmanship, he stood forth a miracle of her skill.

But not to be figurative, (a fault in historic writing which I particularly) eschew) the great Peter possessed in an eminent degree, the seven renowned and noble virtues of knighthood; which, as he had never consulted authors, in the disciplining and cultivating of his mind, I verily believe must have been stowed away in a corner of his heart by dame nature herself—where they flourished, among his hardy qualities, like so many sweet wild flowers, shooting forth and thriving with redundant luxuriance among stubborn rocks. Such was the mind of Peter the Headstrong, and if my admiration for it, has on this occasion, transported my style beyond the sober gravity which becomes the laborious scribe of historic events, I can plead as an apology, that though a little, grey headed Dutchman, arrived almost at the bottom of the down-hill of life, I still retain some portion of that celestial fire, which

sparkles in the eye of youth, when contemplating the virtues and achievements of ancient worthies. Blessed, thrice and nine times blessed, be the good St. Nicholas—that I have escaped the influence of that chilling apathy, which too often freezes the sympathies of age; which like a churlish spirit, sits at the portals of the heart, repulsing every genial sentiment, and paralyzing every spontaneous glow of enthusiasm.

No sooner then, did this scoundrel imputation on his honour reach the ear of Peter Stuyvesant, than he proceeded in a manner which would have redounded to his credit, even if he had studied for years, in the library of Don Quixote himself. He immediately dispatched his valiant trumpeter and squire, Antony Van Corlear, with orders to ride night and day, as herald, to the Amphyctionic council, reproaching them in terms of noble indignation, for giving ear to the slanders of heathen infidels, against the character of a Christian, a gentleman and a soldier—and declaring, that as to the treacherous and bloody plot alledged against him, whoever affirmed it to be true, he lied in his teeth! —to prove which he defied the president of the council and all of his compeers, or if they pleased, their puissant champion, captain Alicxsander Part-ridg that mighty man of Rhodes, to meet him in single combat, where he would trust the vindication of his innocence to the prowess of his arm.

This challenge being delivered with due ceremony, Antony Van Corlear sounded a trumpet of defiance before the whole council, ending with a most horrific and nasal twang, full in the face of captain Partridg, who almost jumped out of his skin in an extacy of astonishment, at the noise. This done he mounted a tall Flanders mare, which he always rode, and trotted merrily towards the Manhattoes—passing through Hartford, and Pyquag and Middletown and all the other border towns—twanging his trumpet like a very devil, so that the sweet vallies and banks of the Connecticut resounded with the warlike melody—and stopping occasionally to eat pumpkin pies, dance at country frolicks, and bundle with the beauteous lasses of those parts—whom he rejoiced exceedingly with his soul stirring instrument.

But the grand council being composed of considerate men, had no idea of running a tilting with such a fiery hero as the hardy Peter—on the contrary they sent him an answer, couched in the meekest, the most mild and provoking terms, in which they assured him that his guilt was proved to their perfect satisfaction, by the testimony of divers sage and respectable Indians, and concluding with this truly amiable paragraph.—“ For your confidant denials of the Barbarous plott charged, will waigh little in ballance against such

evidence, soe that we must still require and seeke
due satisfaction and cecuritie, soe we rest,

Sir,

Youres in wayes of Righteousness, &c.”

I am conscious that the above transaction has been differently recorded by certain historians of the east, and elsewhere ; who seem to have inherited the bitter enmity of their ancestors to the brave Peter—and much good may their inheritance do them. These moss troopers in literature, whom I regard with sovereign scorn, as mere vampers up of vulgar prejudices and fabulous legends, declare, that Peter Stuyvesant requested to have the charges against him, enquired into, by commissioners to be appointed for the purpose ; and yet that when such commissioners were appointed, he refused to submit to their examination. Now this is partly true—he did indeed, most gallantly offer, when that he found a deaf ear was turned to his challenge, to submit his conduct to the rigorous inspection of a court of honour—but then he expected to find it an august tribunal, composed of courteous gentlemen, the governors and nobility, of the confederate plantations, and of the province of New Netherlands ; where he might be tried by his peers, in a manner worthy of his rank and dignity—whereas, let me perish, if they did not send on to the Manhattoes two lean sided hungry pettifoggers, mounted on Narraganset

pacers, with saddle bags under their bottoms, and green satchels under their arms, as if they were about to beat the hoof from one county court to another—in search of a law suit.

The chivalric Peter, as well he might, took no notice of these cunning varlets ; who with professional industry fell to prying and sifting about, in quest of *ex parte* evidence ; bothering and perplexing divers simple Indians and old women, with their cross questioning, until they contradicted and forswore themselves most horribly—as is every day done in our courts of justice. Thus having dispatched their errand to their full satisfaction, they returned to the grand council with their satchels and saddle-bags stuffed full of the most scurvy rumours, apocryphal stories and outrageous heresies, that ever were heard—for all which the great Peter did not care a tobacco stopper ; but I warrant me had they attempted to play off the same trick upon William the Testy, he would have treated them both to an ærial gambol on his patent gallows.

The grand council of the east, held a very solemn meeting on the return of their envoys, and after they had pondered a long time on the situation of affairs, were upon the point of adjourning without being able to agree upon any thing. At this critical moment one of those little, meddlesome, indefatigable spirits, who endeavour to establish a character for patriotism by blowing the bellows of party, until the whole fur-

nace of politics is red-hot with sparks and cinders—and who have just cunning enough to know, that there is no time so favourable for getting on the people's backs, as when they are in a state of turmoil, and attending to every body's business but their own—This aspiring imp of faction, who was called a great politician, because he had secured a seat in council by calumniating all his opponents—He I say, conceived this a fit opportunity to strike a blow that should secure his popularity among his constituents, who lived on the borders of Nieuw Nederlandt, and were the greatest poachers in Christendom, excepting the Scotch border nobles. Like a second Peter the hermit, therefore, he stood forth and preached up a crusade against Peter Stuyvesant, and his devoted city.

He made a speech which lasted three days, according to the ancient custom in these parts, in which he represented the dutch as a race of impious heretics, who neither believed in witchcraft, nor the sovereign virtues of horse shoes—who, left their country for the lucre of gain, not like themselves for the enjoyment of *liberty of conscience*—who, in short, were a race of mere cannibals and anthropophagi, inasmuch as they never eat cod-fish on saturdays, devoured swine's flesh without molasses, and held pumpkins in utter contempt.

This speech had the desired effect, for the council, being awakened by their serjeant at arms, rub-

bed their eyes, and declared that it was just and politic to declare instant war against these unchristian anti-pumpkinites. But it was necessary that the people at large should first be prepared for this measure, and for this purpose the arguments of the little orator were earnestly preached from the pulpit ~~for~~ several Sundays subsequent, and earnestly recommended to the consideration of every good Christian, who professed, as well as practised the doctrine of meekness, charity, and the forgiveness of injuries. This is the first time we hear of the "Drum Ecclesiastic" beating up for political recruits in our country; and it proved of such signal efficacy, that it has since been called into frequent service throughout our union. A cunning politician is often found skulking under the clerical robe, with an outside all religion, and an inside all political rancour. Things spiritual and things temporal are strangely jumbled together, like poisons and antidotes on an apothecary's shelf, and instead of a devout sermon, the simple church-going folk, have often a political pamphlet, thrust down their throats, labeled with a pious text from Scripture.

CHAP. V.

How the New Amsterdammers became great in arms, and of the direful catastrophe of a mighty army—together with Peter Stuyvesant's measures to fortify the City—and how he was the original founder of the Battery.

BUT notwithstanding that the grand council, as I have already shewn, were amazingly discreet in their proceedings respecting the New Netherlands, and conducted the whole with almost as much silence and mystery, as does the sage British cabinet one of its ill star'd *secret expeditions*—yet did the ever watchful Peter receive as full and accurate information of every movement, as does the court of France of all the notable enterprises I have mentioned.—He accordingly set himself to work, to render the machinations of his bitter adversaries abortive.

I know that many will censure the precipitation of this stout hearted old governor, in that he hurried into the expenses of fortification, without ascertaining whether they were necessary, by prudently waiting until the enemy was at the door. But they should recollect Peter Stuyvesant had not the benefit of an insight into the modern arcana of politics, and was strangely bigotted to certain obso-

lete maxims of the old school ; among which he firmly believed, that, to render a country respected abroad, it was necessary to make it formidable at home—and that a nation should place its reliance for peace and security, more upon its own strength, than on the justice or good will of its neighbours.—He proceeded therefore, with all diligence, to put the province and metropolis in a strong posture of defence.

Among the few remnants of ingenious inventions which remained from the days of William the Testy, were those impregnable bulwarks of public safety, militia laws ; by which the inhabitants were obliged to turn out twice a year, with such military equipments—as it pleased God ; and were put under the command of very valiant taylor, and man milliner, who though on ordinary occasions, the meekest, pippen-hearted little men in the world, were very devils at parades and court-martials, when they had cocked hats on their heads, and swords by their sides. Under the instructions of these periodical warriors, the gallant train bands made marvellous proficiency in the mystery of gunpowder. They were taught to face to the right, to wheel to the left, to snap off empty firelocks without winking, to turn a corner without any great uproar or irregularity, and to march through sun and rain from one end of the town to the other without flinching—until in the end they became so valour-

ous that they fired off blank cartridges, without so much as turning away their heads—could hear the largest field piece discharged, without stopping their ears or falling into much confusion—and would even go through all the fatigues and perils of a summer day's parade, without having their ranks much thinned by desertion!

True it is, the genius of this truly pacific people was so little given to war, that during the intervals which occurred between field days, they generally contrived to forget all the military tuition they had received; so that when they re-appeared on parade, they scarcely knew the butt end of the musket from the muzzle, and invariably mistook the right shoulder for the left—a mistake which however was soon obviated by shrewdly chalking their left arms. But whatever might be their blunders and awkwardness, the sagacious Kieft, declared them to be of but little importance—since, as he judiciously observed, one campaign would be of more instruction to them than a hundred parades; for though two-thirds of them might be food for powder, yet such of the other third as did not run away, would become most experienced veterans.

The great Stuyvesant had no particular veneration for the ingenious experiments and institutions of his shrewd predecessor, and among other things, held the militia system in very considerable contempt, which he was often heard to call in joke—for

he was sometimes fond of a joke—governor Kieft's broken reed. As, however, the present emergency was pressing, he was obliged to avail himself of such means of defence as were next at hand, and accordingly appointed a general inspection and parade of the train bands. But oh! Mars and Bellona, and all ye other powers of war, both great and small, what a turning out was here!—Here came men without officers, and officers without men—long fowling pieces, and short blunderbusses—muskets of all sorts and sizes, some without bayonets, others without locks, others without stocks, and many without lock, stock, or barrel.—Cartridge-boxes, shot belts, powder-horns, swords, hatchets, snicker-snees, crow-bars, and broomsticks, all mingled higgledy, piggleddy—like one of our continental armies at the breaking out of the revolution.

The sturdy Peter eyed this ragged regiment with some such rueful aspect, as a man would eye the devil; but knowing, like a wise man, that all he had to do was to make the best out of a bad bargain, he determined to give his heroes a seasoning. Having therefore drilled them through the manual exercise over and over again, he ordered the fifes to strike up a quick march, and trudged his sturdy boots backwards and forwards, about the streets of New Amsterdam, and the fields adjacent, till I warrant me, their short legs ached, and their fat sides sweated again. But this was not

all; the martial spirit of the old governor caught fire from the sprightly music of the fife, and he resolved to try the mettle of his troops, and give them a taste of the hardships of iron war. To this end he encamped them as the shades of evening fell, upon a hill formerly called Bunker's hill, at some distance from the town, with a full intention of initiating them into the discipline of camps, and of renewing the next day, the toils and perils of the field. But so it came to pass, that in the night there fell a great and heavy rain, which descended in torrents upon the camp, and the mighty army of swing tails strangely melted away before it; so that when Gaffer Phœbus came to shed his morning beams upon the place, saving Peter Stuyvesant and his trumpeter Van Corlear, scarce one was to be found of all the multitude, that had taken roost there the night before.

This awful dissolution of his army would have appalled a commander of less nerve than Peter Stuyvesant; but he considered it as a matter of but small importance, though he thenceforward regarded the militia system with ten times greater contempt than ever, and took care to provide himself with a good garrison of chosen men, whom he kept in pay, of whom he boasted that they at least possessed the quality, indispensable in soldiers, of being *water proof*.

The next care of the vigilant Stuyvesant, was

to strengthen and fortify New Amsterdam. For this purpose he reared a substantial barrier that reached across the island from river to river, being the distance of a full half a mile!—a most stupendous work, and scarcely to be rivalled in the opinion of the old inhabitants, by the great wall of China, or the Roman wall erected in Great Britain against the incursions of the Scots, or the wall of brass that Dr. Faustus proposed to build round Germany, by the aid of the devil.

The materials of which this wall was constructed are differently described, but from a majority of opinions I am inclined to believe that it was a picket fence of especial good pine posts, intended to protect the city, not merely from the sudden invasions of foreign enemies, but likewise from the incursions of the neighbouring Indians.

Some traditions it is true, have ascribed the building of this wall to a later period, but they are wholly incorrect; for a memorandum in the Stuyvesant manuscript, dated towards the middle of the governor's reign, mentions this wall particularly, as a very strong and curious piece of workmanship, and the admiration of all the savages in the neighbourhood. And it mentions moreover the alarming circumstance of a drove of stray cows, breaking through the grand wall of a dark night; by which the whole community of New Amsterdam was thrown into as great panic, as were the people of

Rome, by the sudden irruptions of the Gauls, or the valiant citizens of Philadelphia, during the time of our revolution: by a fleet of empty kegs floating down the Delaware.*

But the vigilance of the governor was more especially manifested by an additional fortification which he erected as an out work to fort Amsterdam, to protect the sea bord, or water edge. I have ascertained by the most painful and minute investigation, that it was neither fortified according to the method of Evrard de Bar-le-duc, that earliest inventor of complete system; the dutch plan of Marollois; the French method invented by by Antoine de Ville; the Flemish of Stevin de Bruges; the Polish of Adam de Treitach, or the Italian of Sardi.

He did not pursue either of the three systems of Pagan; the three of Vauban; the three of Scheiter; the three of Coehorn, that illustrious dutchman, who adapted all his plans to the defence of

* In an antique view of Nieuw Amsterdam, taken some few years after the above period, is an accurate representation of this wall, which stretched along the course of *Wall-street*, so called in commemoration of this great bulwark. One gate, called the *Land-poort* opened upon Broadway, hard by where at present stands the Trinity Church; and another called the *Water-poort*, stood about where the Tontine coffee-house is at present—opening upon *Smits Vleye*, or as it is commonly called *Smith fly*; then a marshy valley, with a creek or inlet, extending up what we call maiden lane.

low and marshy countries—or the hundred and sixty methods, laid down by Francisco Marchi of Bologna.

The fortification did not consist of a Polygon, inscribed in a circle, according to Alain Manesson Maillet ; nor with four long batteries, agreeably to the expensive system of Blondel ; nor with the *fortification à rebours* of Dona Rosetti, nor the *Caponiere Couverte*, of the ingenious St. Julien ; nor with angular polygons and numerous casemates, as recommended by Antoine d'Herbert ; who served under the duke of Wirtemberg, grandfather to the second wife, and first queen of Jerome Bonaparte—otherwise called Jerry Sneak.

It was neither furnished with bastions, fashioned after the original invention of Zisca, the Bohemian ; nor those used by Achmet Bassa, at Otranto in 1480 ; nor those recommended by San Micheli of Verona ; neither those of triangular form, treated of by Speele, the high dutch engineer of Strasbotrg, or the famous wooden bastions, since erected in this renowned city, the destruction of which, is recorded in a former chapter. In fact, governor Stuyvesant, like the celebrated Montalembert, held bastions in absolute contempt ; yet did he not like him substitute a *tenaille angulaire des polygones à ailerons*.

He did not make use of Myrtella towers, as are now erecting at Quebec ; neither did he erect

flagstuffs and windmills as was done by his illustrious predecessor of Saardam ; nor did he employ circular castellated towers, or batteries with two tier of heavy artillery, and a third of columbiads on the top ; as are now erecting for the defence of this defenceless city.

My readers will perhaps be surprized, that out of so many systems, governor Stuyvesant should find none to suit him ; this may be tolerably accounted for, by the simple fact, that many of them were unfortunately invented long since his time ; and as to the rest, he was as ignorant of them, as the child that never was and never will be born. In truth, it is more than probable, that had they all been spread before him, with as many more into the bargain ; that same peculiarity of mind, that acquired him the name of Hard-koppig Piet, would have induced him to follow his own plans, in preference to them all. In a word, he pursued no system either past, present or to come ; he equally disdained to imitate his predecessors, of whom he had never heard—his contemporaries, whom he did not know ; or his unborn successors, whom, to say the truth, he never once thought of in his whole life. His great and capacious mind was convinced, that the simplest method is often the most efficient and certainly the most expeditious, he therefore fortified the water edge with a formidable mud breast work, solidly faced, after the

manner of the dutch ovens common in those days, with clam shells.

These frowning bulwarks in process of time, came to be pleasantly overrun by a verdant carpet of grass and clover, and their high embankments overshadowed by wide spreading sycamores, among whose foilage the little birds sported about, making the air to resound with their joyous notes. The old burghers would repair of an afternoon to smoke their pipes under the shade of their branches, contemplating the golden sun as he gradually sunk into the west an emblem of that tranquil end toward which themselves were hastening—while the young men and the damsels of the town would take many a moonlight stroll among these favourite haunts, watching the silver beams of chaste Cynthia, tremble along the calm bosom of the bay, or light up the white sail of some gliding bark, and interchanging the honest vows of constant affection. Such was the origin of that renowned walk, *the Battery*, which though ostensibly devoted to the purposes of war, has ever been consecrated to the sweet delights of peace. The favourite walk of declining age—the healthful resort of the feeble invalid—the sunday refreshment of the dusty tradesman—the scene of many a boyish gambol—the rendezvous of many a tender assignation—the comfort of the citizen—the ornament of New York, and the pride of the lovely island of Mannahata.

CHAP. VI.

How the people of the east country were suddenly afflicted with a diabolical evil—and their judicious measures for the extirpation thereof.

HAVING thus provided for the temporary security of New Amsterdam, and guarded it against any sudden surprise, the gallant Peter took a hearty pinch of snuff, and snapping his fingers, set the great council of Amphyctions, and their champion, the doughty Alicxsander Partridg at defiance. It is impossible to say, notwithstanding, what might have been the issue of this affair, had not the great council been all at once involved in huge perplexity, and as much horrible dissension sown among its members, as of yore was stirred up in the camp of the brawling warriors of Greece.

The all potent council of the league, as I have shewn in my last chapter, had already announced its hostile determinations, and already was the mighty colony of New Haven and the puissant town of Pyquag, otherwise called Wethersfield—famous for its onions and its witches—and the great trading house of Hartford, and all the other redoubtable little border towns, in a prodigious turmoil, furbishing up their rusty fowling pieces and shouting aloud for war; by which they anticipated easy conquests, and

gorgeous spoils, from the little fat dutch villages. But this joyous brawling was soon silenced by the conduct of the colony of Massachusetts. Struck with the gallant spirit of the brave old Peter, and convinced by the chivalric frankness and heroic warmth of his vindication, they refused to believe him guilty of the infamous plot most wrongfully laid at his door. With a generosity for which I would yield them immortal honour, they declared, that no determination of the grand council of the league, should bind the general court of Massachusetts, to join in an offensive war, which should appear to such general court to be unjust.*

This refusal immediately involved the colony of Massachusetts and the other combined colonies, in very serious difficulties and disputes, and would no doubt have produced a dissolution of the confederacy, but that the great council of Amphyctions, finding that they could not stand alone, if mutilated by the loss of so important a member as Massachusetts, were fain to abandon for the present their hostile machinations against the Manhattoes. Such is the marvellous energy and puissance of those notable confederacies, composed of a number of sturdy, self-will'd, discordant parts, loosely banded together by a puny general government. As it is however, the warlike towns of Connecticut, had no

* Haz. Col. S. Pap.

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cause to deplore this disappointment of their martial ardour ; for by my faith—though the combined powers of the league might have been too potent in the end, for the robustious warriors of the Manhattoes—yet in the interim would the lion hearted Peter and his myrmidons, have choaked the stomachful heroes of Pyquag with their own onions, and have given the other little border towns such a scouring, that I warrant they would have had no stomach to squat on the land, or invade the hen-roost of a New Nederlander for a century to come.

Indeed there was more than one cause to divert the attention of the good people of the east, from their hostile purposes ; for just about this time were they horribly beleagured and harassed by the inroads of the prince of darkness, divers of whose liege subjects they detected, lurking within their camp, all of whom they incontinently roasted as so many spies, and dangerous enemies. Not to speak in parables, we are informed, that at this juncture, the unfortunate “east countrie” was exceedingly troubled and confounded by multitudes of losel witches, who wrought strange devices to beguile and distress the multitude ; and notwithstanding numerous judicious and bloody laws had been enacted, against all “solemn conversing or compacting with the divil, by way of conjuracon or the like,”* yet

* New Plymouth record.

did the dark crime of witchcraft continue to encrease to an alarming degree, that would almost transcend belief, were not the fact too well authenticated to be even doubted for an instant.

What is particularly worthy of admiration is, that this terrible art, which so long has baffled the painful researches, and abstruse studies of philosophers, astrologers, alchemists, theurgists and other sages, was chiefly confined to the most ignorant, decrepid, ugly, abominable old women in the community, who had scarcely more brains than the broomsticks they rode upon. Where they first acquired their infernal education—whether from the works of the ancient Theurgists—the demonology of the Egyptians—the belomancy, or divination by arrows of the Scythians—the spectrology of the Germans—the magic of the Persians—the enchantment of the Laplanders, or from the archives of the dark and mysterious caverns of the Dom Daniel, is a question pregnant with a host of learned and ingenious doubts—particularly as most of them were totally unversed in the occult mysteries of the alphabet.

When once an alarm is sounded, the public, who love dearly to be in a panic, are not long in want of proofs to support it—raise but the cry of yellow fever, and immediately every head-ache, and indigestion, and overflowing of the bile is pronounced the terrible epidemic—In like manner in

the present instance, whoever was troubled with a cholic or lumbago, was sure to be bewitched, and woe to any unlucky old woman that lived in his neighbourhood. Such a howling abomination could not be suffered to remain long unnoticed, and it accordingly soon attracted the fiery indignation of the sober and reflective part of the community—more especially of those, who, whilome, had evinced so much active benevolence in the conversion of quakers and anabaptists. The grand council of the asphyctions publicly set their faces against so deadly and dangerous a sin, and a severe scrutiny took place after those nefarious witches, who were easily detected by devil's pinches, black cats, broomsticks, and the circumstance of their only being able to weep three tears, and those out of the left eye.

It is incredible the number of offences that were detected, “for every one of which,” says the profound and reverend Cotton Mather, in that excellent work, the history of New England—“we have such a sufficient evidence, that no reasonable man in this whole country ever did question them; *and it will be unreasonable to do it in any other.*”†

Indeed, that authentic and judicious historian John Josselyn, Gent. furnishes us with unquestionable facts on this subject. “There are none,” ob-

† Mather's hist. N. Eng B. 6. ch. 7.

serves he "that beg in this country, but there be witches too many—bottle-bellied witches and others, that produce many strange apparitions, if you will believe report of a shalop at sea manned with women—and of a ship and great red horse standing by the main mast; the ship being in a small cove to the eastward vanished of a sudden," &c.

The number of delinquents, however, and their magical devices, were not more remarkable than their diabolical obstinacy. Though exhorted in the most solemn, persuasive and affectionate manner, to confess themselves guilty, and be burnt for the good of religion, and the entertainment of the public; yet did they most pertinaciously persist in asserting their innocence. Such incredible obstinacy was in itself deserving of immediate punishment, and was sufficient proof, if proof were necessary, that they were in league with the devil, who is perverseness itself. But their judges were just and merciful, and were determined to punish none that were not convicted on the best of testimony; not that they needed any evidence to satisfy their own minds, for, like true and experienced judges their minds were perfectly made up, and they were thoroughly satisfied of the guilt of the prisoners before they proceeded to try them; but still something was necessary to convince the community at large—to quiet those prying quid nuncs who should come after them—in short, the

world must be satisfied. Oh the world—the world !—all the world knows the world of trouble the world is eternally occasioning !—The worthy judges therefore, like myself in this most authentic, minute and satisfactory of all histories, were driven to the necessity of sifting, detecting and making evident as noon day, matters which were at the commencement all clearly understood and firmly decided upon in their own own pericraniums—so that it may truly be said, that the witches were burnt, to gratify the populace of the day—but were tried for the satisfaction of the whole world that should come after them !

Finding therefore that neither exhortation, sound reason, nor friendly entreaty had any avail on these hardened offenders, they resorted to the more urgent arguments of the torture, and having thus absolutely wrung the truth from their stubborn lips—they condemned them to undergo the roasting due unto the heinous crimes they had confessed. Some even carried their perverseness so far, as to expire under the torture, protesting their innocence to the last ; but these were looked upon as thoroughly and absolutely possessed, and governed by the devil, and the pious bye-standers, only lamented that they had not lived a little longer, to have perished in the flames.

In the city of Ephesus, we are told, that the plague was expelled by stoning a ragged old beg-

gar to death, whom Appolonius pointed out as being the evil spirit that caused it, and who actually shewed himself to be a demon, by changing into a shagged dog. In like manner, and by measures equally sagacious, a salutary check was given to this growing evil. The witches were all burnt, banished or panic struck, and in a little while there was not an ugly old woman to be found throughout New England—which is doubtless one reason why all their young women are so handsome. Those honest folk who had suffered from their incantations gradually recovered, excepting such as had been afflicted with twitches and aches, which, however assumed the less alarming aspects of rheumatism, sciatics and lumbagos—and the good people of New England, abandoning the study of the occult sciences, turned their attention to the more profitable hocus pocus of trade, and soon became expert in the legerdemain art of turning a penny. Still however, a tinge of the old leaven is discernible, even unto this day, in their characters—witches occasionally start up among them in different disguises, as physicians, civilians, and divines. The people at large shew a cuteness, a cleverness, and a profundity of wisdom, that savours strongly of witchcraft—and it has been remarked, that whenever any stones fall from the moon, the greater part of them are sure to tumble into New England!

CHAP. VII.

Which records the rise and renown of a valiant commander, shewing that a man, like a bladder, may be puffed up to greatness and importance, by mere wind.

WHEN treating of these tempestuous times, the unknown writer of the Stayvesant manuscript, breaks out into a vehement apostrophe, in praise of the good St. Nicholas ; to whose protecting care he entirely ascribes the strange dissensions that broke out in the council of the anthropyctions, and the direful witchcraft that prevailed in the east country—whereby the hostile machinations against the *Nederlanders* were for a time frustrated, and his favourite city of New Amsterdam, preserved from imminent peril and deadly warfare. Darkness and lowering superstition hung over the fair valleys of the east ; the pleasant banks of the Connecticut, no longer echoed with the sounds of rustic gaiety ; direful phantoms and portentous apparitions were seen in the air—gliding spectrums haunted every wild brook and dreary glen—strange voices, made by viewless forms, were heard in desert solitudes—and the border towns were so occupied in detecting and punishing the knowing old women, that had produced these alarming appearances, that for a while

the province of New Nederlandt and its inhabitants were totally forgotten.

The great Peter therefore, finding that nothing was to be immediately apprehended from his eastern neighbours, turned himself about with a praiseworthy vigilance that ever distinguished him, to put a stop to the insults of the Swedes. These loose freebooters my attentive reader will recollect had begun to be very troublesome towards the latter part of the reign of William the Testy, having set the proclamations of that doughty little governor at naught, and put the intrepid Jan Jansen Alpendam to a perfect non plus!

Peter Stuyvesant, however, as has already been shewn, was a governor of different habits and turn of mind—without more ado he immediately issued orders for raising a corps of troops to be stationed on the southern frontier, under the command of brigadier general Jacobus Von Poffenburgh. This illustrious warrior had risen to great importance during the reign of Wihelms Kcift, and if histories speak true, was second in command to the gallant Van Curler, when he and his ragged regiment were inhumanly kicked out of Fort Good Hope by the Yankees. In consequence of having been in such a “memorable affair,” and of having received more wounds on a certain honourable part that shall be nameless, than any of his comrades, he was ever after considered as a hero, who had “seen

some service." Certain it is, he enjoyed the unlimited confidence and friendship of William the Testy ; who would sit for hours and listen with wonder to his gunpowder narratives of surprising victories—he had never gained : and dreadful battles—from which he had run away ; and the governor was once heard to declare that had he lived in ancient times, he might unquestionably have claimed the armour of Achilles—being not merely like Ajax, a mighty blustering man of battle, but in the cabinet a second Ulysses, that is to say, very valiant of speech and long winded—all which, as nobody in New Amsterdam knew aught of the ancient heroes in question, passed totally uncontradicted.

It was tropically observed by honest old Socrates, of hen-pecked memory, that heaven had infused into some men at their birth a portion of intellectual gold ; into others of intellectual silver ; while others were bounteously furnished out with abundance of brass and iron—now of this last class was undoubtedly the great general Von Poffenburgh, and from the great display he continually made, I am inclined to think that dame nature, who will sometimes be partial, had blessed him with enough of those valuable materials to have fitted up a dozen ordinary braziers. But what is most to be admired is, that he contrived to pass off all his brass and copper upon Wilhelmus Kieft, who was no great judge of base coin, as pure and genuine gold. The consequence

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was, that upon the resignation of Jacobus Van Cullet, who after the loss of fort Goed Hoop retired like a veteran general, to live under the shade of his laurels, the mighty "copper captain" was promoted to his station. This he filled with great importance, always styling himself "commander in chief of the armies of the New Netherlands;" though to tell the truth the armies, or rather army, consisted of a handful of half uniformed, hen stealing, bottle bruizing raggamuffins.

Such was the character of the warrior appointed by Peter Stuyvesant to defend his southern frontier, nor may it be uninteresting to my reader to have a glimpse of his person. He was not very tall, but notwithstanding, a huge, full bodied man, whose size did not so much arise from his being fat, as windy; being so completely inflated with his own importance, that he resembled one of those puffed up bags of wind, which old Eolus, in an incredible fit of generosity, gave to that vagabond warrior Ulysses.

His dress comported with his character, for he had almost as much brass and copper without, as nature had stored away within—His coat was crossed and slashed, and carbonadoed, with stripes of copper lace, and swathed round the body with a crimson sash, of the size and texture of a fishing net, doubtless to keep his valiant heart from bursting through his ribs. His head and whiskers were pro-

fusely powdered, from the midst of which his full blooded face glowed like a fiery furnace; and his magnanimous soul seemed ready to bounce out at a pair of large glassy blinking eyes, which projected like those of a lobster.

I swear to thee, worthy reader, if report belie not this great general, I would give half my fortune (which at this moment is not enough to pay the bill of my landlord) to have seen him accoutered cap-a-pie, in martial array—booted to the middle—sashed to the chin—collared to the ears—whiskered to the muzzle—crowned with an overshadowing cocked-hat, and girded with a leathern belt ten inches broad, from which trailed a faulchion of a length that I dare not mention.

Thus equipped, he strutted about, as bitter looking a man of war as the far-famed More of More Hall, when he sallied forth, armed at all points, to slay the Dragon of Wantley—

“ Had you but seen him in this dress
How fierce he look'd and how big;
You would have thought him for to be
Some Egyptian Porcupig.

He frightened all, cats, dogs and all,
Each cow, each horse, and each hog;
For fear they did flee, for they took him to be
Some strange outlandish hedge hog.”*

* Ballad of Drag. of Want.

Notwithstanding all the great endowments and transcendent qualities of this renowned general, I must confess he was not exactly the kind of man that the gallant Peter the Headstrong would have chosen to command his troops—but the truth is, that in those days the province did not abound, as at present, in great military characters; who like so many Cincinnatuses people every little village—marshalling out cabbages, instead of soldiers, and signaling themselves in the corn field, instead of the field of battle. Who have surrendered the toils of war, for the more useful but inglorious arts of peace, and so blended the laurel with the olive, that you may have a general for a landlord, a colonel for a stage driver, and your horse shod by a valiant “captain of volunteers”—Neither had the great Stuyvesant an opportunity of choosing, like modern rulers, from a loyal band of editors of newspapers—no mention being made in the histories of the times, of any such class of mercenaries, being retained in pay by government, either as trumpeters, champions, or body guards. The redoubtable general Von Poffenburgh, therefore, was appointed to the command of the new levied troops; chiefly because there were no competitors for the station, and partly because it would have been a breach of military etiquette, to have appointed a younger officer over his head—an injustice, which the great Peter would rather have died than have committed.

No sooner did this thrice valiant copper captain receive marching orders, than he conducted his army undauntedly to the southern frontier; through wild lands and savage deserts; over insurmountable mountains, across impassable floods and through impenetrable forests; subduing a vast tract of uninhabited country, and overturning, discomfiting and making incredible slaughter of certain hostile hosts of grass-hoppers, toads and pismires; which had gathered together to oppose his progress—an achievement unequalled in the pages of history, save by the famed retreat of old Xenophon and his ten thousand Grecians. All this accomplished, he established on the South (or Delaware) river, a redoubtable redoubt, named FORT CASIMER, in honour of a favourite pair of brimstone coloured trunk breeches of the governor's. As this fort will be found to give rise to very important and interesting events, it may be worth while to notice that it was afterwards called Neiuw Amstel, and was the original germ of the present flourishing town of NEW CASTLE, an appellation erroneously substituted for *No Castle*, there neither being, nor ever having been a castle, or any thing of the kind upon the premises.

The Swedes did not suffer tamely this menacing movement of the Nederlanders; on the contrary Jan Printz, at that time governor of New Sweden, issued a sturdy protest against what he

termed an encroachment upon his jurisdiction.— But the valiant Von Poffenburgh had become too well versed in the nature of proclamations and protests, while he served under William the Testy, to be in any wise daunted by such paper warfare. His fortress being finished, it would have done any man's heart good to behold into what a magnitude he immediately swelled. He would stride in and out a dozen times a day, surveying it in front and in rear; on this side and on that.—Then would he dress himself in full regimentals, and strut backwards and forwards, for hours together, on the top of his little rampart—like a vain glorious cock pidgeon vapouring on the top of his coop. In a word, unless my readers have noticed, with curious eye, the petty commander of a little, snivelling, military post, swelling with all the vanity of new regimentals, and the pomposity derived from commanding a handful of tatterdemalions, I despair of giving them any adequate idea of the prodigious dignity of general Von Poffenburgh.

It is recorded in the delectable romance of Pierce Forest, that a young knight being dubbed by king Alexander, did incontinently gallop into an adjoining forest, and belaboured the trees with such might and main, that the whole court were convinced that he was the most potent and courageous gentleman on the face of the earth. In like man-

ner the great general Von Poffenburgh would ease off that valourous spleen, which like wind is so apt to grow unruly in the stomachs of new made soldiers, impelling them to box-lobby brawls, and broken headed quarrels.—For at such times, when he found his martial spirit waxing hot within him, he would prudently sally forth into the fields, and lugging out his trusty sabre, of full two flemish ells in length, would lay about him most lustily, decapitating cabbages by platoons—hewing down whole phalanxes of sunflowers, which he termed gigantic Swedes ; and if peradventure, he espied a colony of honest big bellied pumpkins quietly basking themselves in the sun, “ ah caitiff Yankees,” would he roar, “ have I caught ye at last ! ”—so saying, with one sweep of his sword, he would cleave the unhappy vegetables from their chins to their waistbands : by which warlike havoc, his choler being in some sort allayed, he would return to his garrison with a full conviction, that he was a very miracle of military prowess.

The next ambition of general Von Poffenburgh was to be thought a strict disciplinarian. Well knowing that discipline is the soul of all military enterprize, he enforced it with the most rigorous precision ; obliging every man to turn out his toes, and hold up his head on parade, and prescribing the breadth of their ruffles to all such as had any shirts to their backs.

Having one day, in the course of his devout researches in the bible, (for the pious Eneas himself, could not exceed him in outward religion) encountered the history of Absalom and his melancholy end; the general in an evil hour, issued orders for cropping the hair of both officers and men throughout the garrison. Now it came to pass, that among his officers was one Kildermeeester; a sturdy old veteran, who had cherished through the course of a long life, a rugged mop of hair, not a little resembling the shag of a Newfoundland dog; terminating with an immoderate queue, like the handle of a frying pan; and queued so tightly to his head, that his eyes and mouth generally stood ajar, and his eye-brows were drawn up to the top of his forehead. It may naturally be supposed that the possessor of so goodly an appendage would resist with abhorrence, an order condemning it to the shears. Sampson himself could not have held his wig more sacred, and on hearing the general orders, he discharged a tempest of veteran, soldier-like oaths, and dunder and blixums—swore he would break any man's head who attempted to meddle with his tail—queued it stiffer than ever, and whisked it about the garrison, as fiercely as the tail of a crocodile.

The eel-skin queue of old Kildermeeester, became instantly an affair of the utmost importance. The commander in chief was too enlightened an officer not to perceive, that the discipline of the garrison,

the subordination and good order of the *armies* of the Nieuw Nederlandts, the consequent safety of the whole province, and ultimately the dignity and prosperity of their high mightinesses, the lords states general, but above all, the dignity of the great general Von Poffenburgh, all imperiously demanded the docking of that stubborn queue. He therefore patriotically determined that old Kildermeester should be publicly shorn of his glories in presence of the whole garrison—the old man as resolutely stood on the defensive—whereupon the general, as became a great man, was highly exasperated, and the offender was arrested and tried by a court martial for mutiny, desertion and all the other rigmarole of offences noticed in the articles of war, ending with a “videlicet, in wearing an eel-skin queue, three feet long, contrary to orders”—Then came on arraignments, and trials, and pleadings, and convictings, and the whole country was in a ferment about this unfortunate queue. As it is well known that the commander of a distant frontier post has the power of acting pretty much after his own will, there is little doubt but that the old veteran would have been hanged or shot at least, had he not luckily fallen ill of a fever, through mere chagrin and mortification—and most flagitiously deserted from all earthly command, with his beloved locks unviolated. His obstinacy remained unshaken to the very last moment, when he directed that

he should be carried to his grave with his eel-skin queue sticking out of a knot hole in his coffin.

This magnanimous affair obtained the general great credit as an excellent disciplinarian, but it is hinted that he was ever after subject to bad dreams, and fearful visitations in the night—when the grizzly spectrum of old Kildermeester would stand sentinel by his bed side, erect as a pump, his enormous queue strutting out like the handle.

BOOK VI.

Containing the second part of the reign of Peter the Headstrong—and his gallant achievements on the Delaware.

CHAP. I.

In which is presented a warlike portrait of the Great Peter.—And how General Von Poffenburgh gave a stout carousal, for which he got more kicks than coppers.

HITHERTO most venerable and courteous reader, have I shewn thee the administration of the valourous Stuyvesant, under the mild moonshine of peace; or rather the grim tranquillity of awful preparation; but now the war drum rumbles, the brazen trumpet brays its thrilling note, and the rude clash of hostile arms, speaks fearful prophecies of coming troubles. The gallant warrior starts from soft repose, from golden visions and voluptuous ease; where in the dulcet, “piping time of peace,” he sought sweet solace after all his toils. No more in beauty’s syren lap reclined, he weaves fair garlands for his lady’s brows; no more entwines with

flowers his shining sword, nor through the live-long lazy summers day, chaunts forth his lovesick soul in madrigals. To manhood roused, he spurns the amorous flute ; doffs from his brawny back the robe of peace, and clothes his pampered limbs in panoply of steel. O'er his dark brow, where late the myrtle waved ; where wanton roses breathed enervate love, he rears the beaming casque and nodding plume ; grasps the bright shield and shakes the ponderous lance ; or mounts with eager pride his fiery steed ; and burns for deeds of glorious chivalry !

But soft, worthy reader ! I would not have you go about to imagine, that any *preux chevalier* thus hideously begirt with iron existed in the city of New Amsterdam.—This is but a lofty and gigantic mode in which we heroic writers always talk of war, thereby to give it a noble and imposing aspect ; equipping our warriors with bucklers, helms and lances, and a host of other outlandish and obsolete weapons, the like of which perchance they had never seen or heard of ; in the same manner that a cunning statuary arrays a modern general or an admiral in the accoutrements of a Cæsar or an Alexander. The simple truth then of all this oratorical flourish is this.—That the valiant Peter Stuyvesant all of a sudden found it necessary to scour his trusty blade, which too long had rusted in its scabbard, and prepare himself to undergo

those hardy toils of war, in which his mighty soul so much delighted.

Methinks I at this moment behold him in my imagination—or rather I behold his goodly portrait, which still hangs up in the family mansion of the Stuyvesants—arrayed in all the terrors of a true dutch general. His regimental coat of German blue, gorgeously decorated with a goodly shew of large brass buttons, reaching from his waistband to his chin. The voluminous skirts turned up at the corners and separating gallantly behind, so as to display the seat of a sumptuous pair of brimstone coloured trunk breeches—a graceful style still prevalent among the warriors of our day, and which is in conformity to the custom of ancient heroes, who scorned to defend themselves in rear.—His face rendered exceeding terrible and warlike by a pair of black mustachios; his hair strutting out on each side in stiffly pomatumed ear locks and descending in a rat tail queue below his waist; a shining stock of black leather supporting his chin, and a little, but fierce cocked hat stuck with a gallant and fiery air, over his left eye. Such was the chivalric port of Peter the Headstrong; and when he made a sudden halt, planted himself firmly on his solid supporter, with his wooden leg, inlaid with silver, a little in advance, in order to strengthen his position; his right hand stuck a-kimbo, his left resting upon the pummel of his

brass hilted sword; his head dressing spiritedly to the right, with a most appalling and hard favoured frown upon his brow—he presented altogether one of the most commanding, bitter looking, and soldierlike figures, that ever strutted upon canvass. —Proceed we now to enquire the cause of this warlike preparation.

The encroaching disposition of the Swedes, on the south, or Delaware river, has been duly recorded in the Chronicles of the reign of William the Testy. These encroachments having been endured with that heroic magnanimity, which is the corner stone, or according to Aristotle, the left hand neighbour of true courage, had been repeated and wickedly aggravated.

The Swedes, who, were of that class of cunning pretenders to Christianity, that read the Bible upside down, whenever it interferes with their interests, inverted the golden maxim, and when their neighbour suffered them to smite him on the one cheek, they generally smote him on the other also, whether it was turned to them or not. Their repeated aggressions had been among the numerous sources of vexation, that conspired to keep the irritable sensibilities of Wilhelmus Kieft, in a constant fever, and it was only owing to the unfortunate circumstance, that he had always a hundred things to do at once, that he did not take such unrelenting vengeance as their offences merited. But

they had now a chieftan of a different character to deal with; and they were soon guilty of a piece of treachery, that threw his honest blood in a ferment, and precluded all further sufference.

Printz, the governor of the province of New Sweden, being either deceased or removed, for of this fact some uncertainty exists; he was succeeded by Jan Risingh, a gigantic Swede, and who, had he not been rather in-kneed and splay-footed, might have served for the model of a Sampson, or a Hercules. He was no less rapacious than mighty, and withal as crafty as he was rapacious; so that in fact there is very little doubt, had he lived some four or five centuries before, he would have made one of those wicked giants, who took such a cruel pleasure in pocketing distressed damsels, when gadding about the world, and locking them up in enchanted castles, without a toilet, a change of linen, or any other convenience.—In consequence of which enormities they fell under the high displeasure of chivalry, and all true, loyal and gallant knights, were instructed to attack and slay outright any miscreant they might happen to find above six feet high; which is doubtless one reason that the race of large men is nearly extinct, and the generations of latter ages so exceeding small.

No sooner did governor Risingh enter upon his office, than he immediately cast his eyes upon the important post of Fort Casimer, and formed the

righteous resolution of taking it into his possession. The only thing that remained to consider, was the mode of carrying his resolution into effect; and here I must do him the justice to say, that he exhibited a humanity rarely to be met with among leaders; and which I have never seen equalled in modern times, excepting among the English, in their glorious affair at Copenhagen. Willing to spare the effusion of blood, and the miseries of open warfare, he benevolently shunned every thing like avowed hostility or regular seige, and resorted to the less glorious, but more merciful expedient of treachery.

Under pretence therefore, of paying a sociable, neighbourly visit to general Von Poffenburgh, at his new post of Fort Casimer, he made requisite preparation, sailed in great state up the Delaware, displayed his flag with the most ceremonious punctilio, and honoured the fortress with a royal salute, previous to dropping anchor. The unusual noise awakened a veteran dutch centinel, who was napping faithfully on his post, and who after hammering his flint for good ten minutes, and rubbing its edge with the corner of his ragged cocked hat, but all to no purpose, contrived to return the compliment, by discharging his rusty firelock with the spark of a pipe, which he borrowed from one of his comrades. The salute indeed would have been answered by the guns of the fort, had they not unfortunately

been out of order, and the magazine deficient in ammunition—accidents to which forts have in all ages been liable, and which were the more excusable in the present instance, as Fort Casimir had only been erected about two years, and general Von Poffenburgh, its mighty commander, had been fully occupied with matters of much greater self importance.

Risingh, highly satisfied with this courteous reply to his salute, treated the fort to a second, for he well knew its puissant and pompous leader, was marvellously delighted with these little ceremonials, which he considered as so many acts of homage paid unto his greatness. He then landed in great state, attended by a suite of thirty men—a prodigious and vain-glorious retinue, for a petty governor of a petty settlement, in those days of primitive simplicity; and to the full as great an army as generally swells the pomp and marches in the rear of our frontier commanders at the present day.

The number in fact might have awakened suspicion, had not the mind of the great Von Poffenburgh been so completely engrossed with an all pervading idea of himself, that he had not room to admit a thought besides. In fact he considered the concourse of Risingh's followers as a compliment to himself—so apt are great men to stand between themselves and the sun, and completely eclipse the truth by their own shadow.

It may readily be imagined how much general Von Poffenburgh was flattered by a visit from so august a personage ; his only embarrassment was, how he should receive him in such a manner as to appear to the greatest advantage, and make the most advantageous impression. The main guard was ordered immediately to turn out, and the arms and regimentals (of which the garrison possessed full half a dozen suits) were equally distributed among the soldiers. One tall lank fellow, appeared in a coat intended for a small man, the skirts of which reached a little below his waist, the buttons were between his shoulders and the sleeves half way to his wrists, so that his hands looked like a couple of huge spades—and the coat not being large enough to meet in front, was linked together by loops, made of a pair of red worsted garters. Another had an old cocked hat, stuck on the back of his head and decorated with a bunch of cocks tails—a third had a pair of rusty gaiters hanging about his heels—while a fourth, who was a short duck legged little trojan, was equipped in a huge pair of the general's cast off breeches, which he held up with one hand, while he grasped his firelock with the other. The rest were accoutred in similar style, excepting three graceless raggamuffins, who had no shirts and but a pair and half of breeches between them, wherefore they were sent to the black hole, to keep them out of view. There is

nothing in which the talents of a prudent commander are more completely testified, than in thus setting matters off to the greatest advantage ; and it is for this reason that our frontier posts at the present day (that of Niagara in particular) display their best suit of regimentals on the back of the centinel who stands in sight of travellers.

His men being thus gallantly arrayed—those who lacked muskets shouldering shovels and pick axes, and every man being ordered to tuck in his shirt tail and pull up his brogues, general Von Poffenburgh first took a sturdy draught of foaming ale, which like the magnanimous More of Morehall* was his invariable practice on all great occasions—which done he put himself at their head, ordered the pine planks, which served as a draw bridge, to be laid down, and issued forth from his castle, like a mighty giant, just refreshed with wine. . But when the two heroes met, then began a scene of warlike parade and chivalric courtesy, that beggars all description. Risingh, who, as I before hinted, was a shrewd, cunning politician, and had grown grey much before his time, in consequence of his craftiness, saw at one glance the ruling passion of

* "————— as soon as he rose,
To make him strong and mighty,
He drank by the tale, six pots of ale,
And a quart of Aqua Vitæ."

the great Von Poffenburgh, and humoured him in all his valorous fantasies.

Their detachments were accordingly drawn up in front of each other ; they carried arms and they presented arms ; they gave the standing salute and the passing salute—They rolled their drums, they flourished their fifes and they waved their colours—they faced to the left, and they faced to the right, and they faced to the right about—They wheeled forward, and they wheeled backward, and they wheeled into *echelon*—They marched and they countermarched, by grand divisions, by single divisions and by sub-divisions—by platoons, by sections and by files—In quick time, in slow time and in no time at all ; for, having gone through all the evolutions of two great armies, including the eighteen manœuvres of Dundas (which, not being yet invented they must have anticipated by intuition or inspiration) having exhausted all that they could recollect or imagine of military tactics, including sundry strange and irregular evolutions, the like of which were never seen before or since, excepting among certain of our newly raised drafts, the two great commanders and their respective troops, came at length to a dead halt, completely exhausted by the toils of war—Never did two valiant train band captains, or two buskin'd theatric heroes, in the renowned tragedies of Pizarro, Tom Thumb, or any other heroical and fighting tragedy, marshal

their gallows-looking, duck-legged, heavy-heeled, sheep-stealing myrmidons with more glory and self-admiration.

These military compliments being finished, general Von Poffenburgh escorted his illustrious visitor, with great ceremony into the fort; attended him throughout the fortifications; shewed him the horn works, crown works, half moons, and various other outworks; or rather the places where they ought to be erected, and where they might be erected if he pleased; plainly demonstrating that it was a place of "great capability," and though at present but a little redoubt, yet that it evidently was a formidable fortress, in embryo. This survey over, he next had the whole garrison put under arms, exercised and reviewed, and concluded by ordering the three bride-well birds to be hauled out of the black hole, brought up to the halberts and soundly flogged, for the amusement of his visitor, and to convince him, that he was a great disciplinarian.

There is no error more dangerous than for a commander to make known the strength, or, as in the present case, the weakness of his garrison; this will be exemplified before I have arrived to an end of my present story, which thus carries its moral like a roasted goose his pudding in its very middle. The cunning Risingh, while he pretended to be struck dumb outright, with the puissance of the

great Von Poffenburgh, took silent note of the incompetency of his garrison, of which he gave a hint to his trusty followers; who tipped each other the wink, and laughed most obstreperously—in their sleeves.

The inspection, review, and flogging being concluded, the party adjourned to the table; for among his other great qualities, the general was remarkably addicted to huge entertainments, or rather carousals, and in one afternoon's campaign would leave more *dead men* on the field, than he ever did in the whole course of his military career. Many bulletins of these bloodless victories do still remain on record; and the whole province was once thrown in amaze, by the return of one of his campaigns; wherein it was stated, that though like captain Bobadel, he had only twenty men to back him, yet in the short space of six months he had conquered and utterly annihilated sixty oxen, ninety hogs, one hundred sheep, ten thousand cabbages, one thousand bushels of potatoes, one hundred and fifty kilderkins of small beer, two thousand seven hundred and thirty five pipes, seventy eight pounds of sugar-plumbs, and forty bars of iron, besides sundry small meats, game, poultry and garden stuff. An atchievement unparalleled since the days of Pantagruel and his all devouring army, and which shewed that it was only necessary to let the great general Von Poffenburgh, and his garrison, loose

in an enemies country, and in a little while they would breed a famine, and starve all the inhabitants.

No sooner therefore had the general received the first intimation of the visit of governor Risingh, than he ordered a big dinner to be prepared ; and privately sent out a detachment of his most experienced veterans, to rob all the hen-roosts in the neighbourhood, and lay the pig-styes under contribution ; a service to which they had been long enured, and which they discharged with such incredible zeal and promptitude, that the garrison table groaned under the weight of their spoils.

I wish with all my heart, my readers could see the valiant Von Poffenburgh, as he presided at the head of the banquet : it was a sight worth beholding—there he sat, in his greatest glory, surrounded by his soldiers, like that famous wine bibber Alexander, whose thirsty virtues he did most ably imitate—telling astounding stories of his hair-breadth adventures and heroic exploits, at which, though all his auditors knew them to be most incontinent and outrageous gasconadoes, yet did they cast up their eyes in admiration and utter many interjections of astonishment. Nor could the general pronounce any thing that bore the remotest semblance to a joke, but the stout Risingh would strike his brawny fist upon the table till every glass

rattled again, throwing himself back in his chair, and uttering gigantic peals of laughter, swearing most horribly, it was the best joke he ever heard in his life.—Thus all was rout and revelry and hideous carousal within Fort Casimer, and so lustily did the great Von Poffenburgh ply the bottle, that in less than four short hours he made himself, and his whole garrison, who all sedulously emulated the deeds of their chieftain, dead drunk, in singing songs, quaffing bumpers, and drinking fourth of July toasts, not one of which, but was as long as a Welsh pedigree or a plea in chancery.

No sooner did things come unto this pass, than the crafty Risingh and his Swedes, who had cunningly kept themselves sober, rose on their entertainers, tied them neck and heels, and took formal possession of the fort, and all its dependencies, in the name of queen Christina, of Sweden : administering, at the same time, an oath of allegiance to all the dutch soldiers, who could be made sober enough to swallow it. Risingh then put the fortifications in order, appointed his discreet and vigilant friend Suen Scutz, a tall, wind-dried, water drinking Swede, to the command, and departed bearing with him this truly amiable garrison, and their puissant commander ; who when brought to himself by a sound drubbing, bore no little resemblance to a “deboshed fish ;” or bloated sea monster, caught upon dry land.

The transportation of the garrison was done to prevent the transmission of intelligence to New Amsterdam ; for much as the cunning Risingh exulted in his stratagem, he dreaded the vengeance of the sturdy Peter Stuyvesant ; whose name spread as much terror in the neighbourhood, as did whilome that of the unconquerable Scanderbeg among his scurvy enemies the Turks.

CHAP. II.

Shewing how profound secrets are strangely brought to light ; with the proceedings of Peter the Headstrong when he heard of the misfortune of General Von Poffenburgh.

WHOEVER first described common fame, or rumour, as belonging to the sager sex, was a very owl for shrewdness. She has in truth certain feminine qualities to an astonishing degree ; particularly that benevolent anxiety to take care of the affairs of others, which keeps her continually hunting after secrets, and gadding about, proclaiming them. Whatever is done openly and in the face of the world, she takes but transient notice of, but whenever a transaction is done in a corner, and attempted to be shrouded in mystery, then her goddessship is at her wit's end to find it out, and takes a most mischievous and lady-like pleasure in publishing it to the world. It is this truly feminine propensity that induces her continually to be prying into cabinets of princes ; listening at the key holes of senate chambers, and peering through chinks and crannies, when our worthy Congress are sitting with closed doors, deliberating between a dozen excellent modes of ruining the nation. It is this which makes her so obnoxious to all wary states-

men and intriguing commanders—such a stumbling block to private negotiations and secret expeditions ; which she often betrays, by means and instruments which never would have been thought of by any but a female head.

Thus it was in the case of the affair of Fort Casimer. No doubt the cunning Risingh imagined, that by securing the garrison, he should for a long time prevent the history of its fate from reaching the ears of the gallant Stuyvesant ; but his exploit was blown to the world when he least expected it, and by one of the last beings he would ever have suspected of enlisting as trumpeter to the wide mouthed deity.

This was one Dirk Schuiler (or Skulker) ; a kind of hanger on to the garrison ; who seemed to belong to no body, and in a manner to be self outlawed. One of those vagabond Cosmopolites, who shirk about the world, as if they had no right or business in it, and who infest the skirts of society, like poachers and interlopers. Every garrison and country village has one or more scape goats of this kind, whose life is a kind of enigma, whose existence is without motive, who comes from the Lord knows where, who lives the Lord knows how, and seems to be made for no other earthly purpose but to keep up the antient and honourable order of idleness—This vagrant philosopher was supposed to have some Indian blood in his veins,

which was manifested by a certain Indian complexion and cast of countenance ; but more especially by his propensities and habits. He was a tall, lank fellow, swift of foot and long-winded. He was generally equipped in a half Indian dress, with belt, leggings, and moccasins. His hair hung in straight gallows locks, about his ears, and added not a little to his shirking demeanour. It is an old remark, that persons of Indian mixture are half civilized, half savage, and half devil, a third half being expressly provided for their particular convenience. It is for similar reasons, and probably with equal truth, that the back-wood-men of Kentucky are styled half man, half horse and half alligator, by the settlers on the Mississippi, and held accordingly in great respect and abhorrence.

The above character may have presented itself to the garrison as applicable to Dirk Schuiler, whom they familiarly dubbed Galgenbrok, or Gallows Dirk. Certain it is, he appeared to acknowledge allegiance to no one—was an utter enemy to work, holding it in no manner of estimation—but lounged about the fort, depending upon chance for a subsistence ; getting drunk whenever he could get liquor, and stealing whatever he could lay his hands on. Every day or two he was sure to get a sound rib-roasting for some of his misdemeanours, which however, as it broke no bones, he made very light of, and scrupled not to repeat the offence,

whenever another opportunity presented. Sometimes in consequence of some flagrant villainy, he would abscond from the garrison, and be absent for a month at a time ; skulking about the woods and swamps, with a long fowling piece on his shoulder, laying in ambush for game—or squatting himself down on the edge of a pond catching fish for hours together, and bearing no little resemblance to that notable bird ycleped the Mud-poke. When he thought his crimes had been forgotten or forgiven, he would sneak back to the fort with a bundle of skins, or a bunch of poultry which perchance he had stolen, and exchange them for liquor, with which, having well soaked his carcass, he would lay in the sun and enjoy all the luxurious indolence of that swinish philosopher Diogenes. He was the terror of all the farm yards in the country ; into which he made fearful inroads ; and sometimes he would make his sudden appearance at the garrison at day break, with the whole neighbourhood at his heels ; like a scoundrel thief of a fox, detected in his maraudings and hunted to his hole. Such was this Dirk Schuiler ; and from the total indifference he shewed to the world or its concerns, and from his true Indian stoicism and taciturnity, no one would ever have dreamt, that he would have been the publisher of the treachery of Risingh.

When the carousal was going on, which proved so fatal to the brave Von Poffenburgh and his

watchful garrison, Dirk skulked about from room to room, being a kind of privileged vagrant, or useless hound, whom nobody noticed. But though a fellow of few words, yet like your taciturn people, his eyes and ears were always open, and in the course of his prowlings he overheard the whole plot of the Swedes. Dirk immediately settled in his own mind, how he should turn the matter to his own advantage. He played the perfect jack-of-both-sides—that is to say, he made a prize of every thing that came in his reach, robbed both parties, stuck the copper bound cocked hat of the puissant Von Poffenburgh, on his head, whipped a huge pair of Risingh's jack boots under his arm, and took to his heels, just before the denouement and confusion at the garrison.

Finding himself completely dislodged from his haunt in this quarter, he directed his flight towards his native place, New Amsterdam, from whence he had formerly been obliged to abscond precipitately, in consequence of misfortune in business—in other words, having been detected in the act of sheep stealing. After wandering many days in the woods, toiling through swamps, fording brooks, swimming various rivers, and encountering a world of hardships that would have killed any other being, but an Indian, a back-wood-man, or the devil, he at length arrived, half famished, and lank as a starved weazle at Communipaw, where he stole a

canoe and paddled over to New Amsterdam. Immediately on landing, he repaired to governor Stuyvesant, and in more words than he had ever spoken before, in the whole course of his life, gave an account of the disastrous affair.

On receiving these direful tidings the valiant Peter started from his seat, as did the stout king Arthur when at "merry Carleile," the news was brought him of the uncourteous misdeeds of the "grim barone"—without uttering a word, he dashed the pipe he was smoking against the back of the chimney—thrust a prodigious quid of negro head tobacco into his left cheek—pulled up his galligaskins, and strode up and down the room, humming, as was customary with him, when in a passion a most hideous north-west ditty. But, as I have before shewn, he was not a man to vent his spleen in idle vapouring. His first measure after the paroxysm of wrath had subsided, was to stump up stairs, to a huge wooden chest, which served as his armoury, from whence he drew forth that identical suit of regimentals described in the preceding chapter. In these portentous habiliments he arrayed himself, like Achilles in the armour of Vulcan, maintaining all the while a most appalling silence; knitting his brows and drawing his breath through his clinched teeth. Being hastily equipped, he thundered down into the parlour like a second Magog—jerked down his trusty sword, from over the fire place, where it

was usually suspended; but before he girded it on his thigh he drew it from its scabbard, and as his eye coursed along the rusty blade, a grim smile stole over his iron visage—It was the first smile that had visited his countenance for five long weeks; but every one who beheld it, prophesied that there would soon be warm work in the province!

Thus armed at all points, with grizly war depicted in each feature; his very cocked hat assuming an air of uncommon defiance; he instantly put himself on the alert, and dispatched Antony Van Corlear hither and thither, this way and that way, through all the muddy streets and crooked lanes of the city: summoning by sound of trumpet his trusty peers to assemble in instant council.—This done, by way of expediting matters, according to the custom of people in a hurry, he kept in continual bustle, thrusting his bottom into every chair, popping his head out of every window, and stumping up and down stairs with his wooden leg in such brisk and incessant motion, that, as I am informed by an authentic historian of the times, the continual clatter bore no small resemblance to the music of a cooper, hooping a flour barrel.

A summons so peremptory, and from a man of the governor's mettle, was not to be trifled with: the sages forthwith repaired to the council chamber, where the gallant Stuyvesant entered in martial style, and took his chair, like another Charlemagne,

among his Paladins. The councillors seated themselves with the utmost tranquillity, and lighting their long pipes, gazed with unruffled composure on his excellency and his regimentals; being, as all councillors should be, not easily flustered, or taken by surprise. The governor, not giving them time to recover from the astonishment they did not feel, addressed them in a short, but soul stirring harangue.

I am extremely sorry, that I have not the advantages of Livy, Thucydides, Plutarch and others of my predecessors, who were furnished as I am told, with the speeches of all their great emperors, generals, and orators, taken down in short hand, by the most accurate stenographers of the time; whereby they were enabled wonderfully to enrich their histories, and delight their readers with sublime strains of eloquence. Not having such important auxiliaries, I cannot possibly pronounce, what was the tenor of governor Stuyvesant's speech. Whether he with maiden coyness hinted to his hearers that "there was a speck of war in the horizon;"—that it would be necessary to resort to the "unprofitable trial of which could do each other the most harm,"—or any other delicate construction of language, whereby the odious subject of war, is handled so fastidiously and modestly by modern statesmen; as a gentleman volunteer handles his filthy salt-petre weapons with gloves, lest he should soil his dainty fingers,

I am bold however to say, from the tenor of Peter Stuyvesant's character, that he did not wrap his rugged subject in silks and ermines, and other sickly trickeries of phrase ; but-spoke forth, like a man of nerve and vigour, who scorned to shrink in words, from those dangers which he stood ready to encounter in very deed. This much is certain, that he concluded by announcing his determination of leading on his troops in person, and routing these costard-monger Swedes, from their usurped quarters at Fort Casimer. To this hardy resolution, such of his council as were awake, gave their usual signal of concurrence, and as to the rest, who had fallen asleep about the middle of the harangue (their "usual custom in the afternoon")—they made not the least objection.

And now was seen in the fair city of New Amsterdam, a prodigious bustle and preparation for iron war. Recruiting parties marched hither and thither, trailing long standards in the mud, with which as at the present day the streets were benevolently covered, for the benefit of those unfortunate wights who are aggrieved with corns. Thus did they lustily call upon and invite all the scrubs, the runagates and the tatterdemalions of the Manhattoes and its vicinity, who had any ambition of six pence a day, and immortal fame into the bargain, to enlist in the cause of glory. For I would have you note that your warlike heroes who trudge in the

rear of conquerors, are generally of that illustrious class of gentlemen, who are equal candidates for the army or the bridewell—the halberts or the whipping post—for whom dame fortune has cast an even die whether they shall make their exit by the sword or the halter—and whose deaths shall, at all events, be a lofty example to their countrymen.

But notwithstanding all this martial rout and invitation, the ranks of honour were but scantily supplied; so averse were the peaceful burghers of New Amsterdam to enlist in foreign broils, or stir beyond that home, which rounded all their earthly ideas. Upon beholding this, the great Peter whose noble heart was all on fire with war and sweet revenge, determined to wait no longer for the tardy assistance of these oily citizens, but to muster up his merry men of the Hudson; who, brought up among woods and wilds and savage beasts, like our yeomen of Kentucky, delighted in nothing so much as desperate adventures and perilous expeditions through the wilderness. Thus resolving, he ordered his trusty squire Antony Van Corlear to have his state galley prepared and duly victualled; which being faithfully performed he attended public service at the great church of St. Nicholas, like a true and pious governor, and then leaving peremptory orders with his council to have the chivalry of the Manhattoes marshalled out and appointed against his return, departed upon his recruiting voyage, up the waters of the Hudson.

CHAP III.

Containing Peter Stuyvesant's voyage up the Hudson, and the wonders and delights of that renowned river.

Now did the soft breezes of the south, steal sweetly over the beauteous face of nature, tempering the panting heats of summer into genial and prolific warmth : when that miracle of hardihood and chivalric virtue, the dauntless Peter Stuyvesant, spread his canvass to the wind, and departed from the fair island of Manna-hata. The galley in which he embarked was sumptuously adorned with pendants and streamers of gorgeous dyes, which fluttered gaily in the wind, or drooped their ends into the bosom of the stream. The bow and poop of this majestic vessel were gallantly bedight, after the rarest dutch fashion, with naked figures of little pursy cupids with periwigs on their heads, and bearing in their hands garlands of flowers, the like of which are not to be found in any book of botany ; being the matchless flowers which flourished in the golden age, and exist no longer, unless it be in the imaginations of ingenious carvers of wood and discolourers of canvass.

Thus rarely decorated, in style befitting the state of the puissant potentate of the Manhattoes, did

the galley of Peter Stuyvesant launch forth upon the bosom of the lordly Hudson ; which as it rolled its broad waves to the ocean, seemed to pause for a while, and swell with pride, as if conscious of the illustrious burthen it sustained.

But trust me gentlefolk, far other was the scene presented to the contemplation of the crew, from that which may be witnessed at this degenerate day. Wildness and savage majesty reigned on the borders of this mighty river—the hand of cultivation had not as yet laid low the dark forests, and tamed the features of the landscape—nor had the frequent sail of commerce yet broken in upon the profound and awful solitude of ages. Here and there might be seen a rude wigwam perched among the cliffs of the mountains, with its curling column of smoke mounting in the transparent atmosphere—but so loftily situated that the whoopings of the savage children, gambolling on the margin of the dizzy heights, fell almost as faintly on the ear, as do the notes of the lark, when lost in the azure vault of heaven. Now and then from the beetling brow of some rocky precipice, the wild deer would look timidly down upon the splendid pageant as it passed below ; and then tossing his branching antlers in the air, would bound away into the thickets of the forest.

Through such scenes did the stately vessel of Peter Stuyvesant pass. Now did they skirt the

bases of the rocky heights of Jersey, which spring up like everlasting walls, reaching from the waves unto the heavens; and were fashioned, if tradition may be believed, in times long past, by the mighty spirit Manetho, to protect his favourite abodes from the unhallowed eyes of mortals. Now did they career it gaily across the vast expanse of Tappan bay, whose wide extended shores present a vast variety of delectable scenery—here the bold promontory, crowned with embowering trees advancing into the bay—there the long woodland slope, sweeping up from the shore in rich luxuriance, and terminating in the rude upland precipice—while at a distance a long waving line of rocky heights, threw their gigantic shades across the water. Now would they pass where some modest little interval, opening among these stupendous scenes, yet retreating as it were for protection into the embraces of the neighbouring mountains, displayed a rural paradise, fraught with sweet and pastoral beauties; the velvet tufted lawn—the bushy copse—the tinkling rivulet, stealing through the fresh and vivid verdure—on whose banks was situated some little Indian village, or peradventure, the rude cabin of some solitary hunter.

The different periods of the revolving day seemed each with cunning magic, to diffuse a different charm over the scene. Now would the jovial sun break gloriously from the east, blazing

from the summits of the eastern hills and sparkling the landscape with a thousand dewy gems; while along the borders of the river were seen heavy masses of mist, which like midnight catiffs, disturbed at his approach, made a sluggish retreat, rolling in sullen reluctance up the mountains. At such times all was brightness and life and gaiety—the atmosphere seemed of an indescribable pureness and transparency—the birds broke forth in wanton madrigals, and the freshening breezes wafted the vessel merrily on her course. But when the sun sunk amid a flood of glory in the west, mantling the heavens and the earth with a thousand gorgeous dyes—then all was calm and silent and magnificent. The late swelling sail hung lifelessly against the mast—the simple seaman with folded arms leaned against the shrouds, lost in that involuntary musing which the sober grandeur of nature commands in the rudest of her children. The vast bosom of the Hudson was like an unruffled mirror, reflecting the golden splendour of the heavens, excepting that now and then a bark canoe would steal across its surface, filled with painted savages, whose gay feathers glared brightly, as perchance a lingering ray of the setting sun, gleamed upon them from the western mountains.

But when the fairy hour of twilight spread its magic mists around, then did the face of nature assume a thousand fugitive charms, which to the

worthy heart that seeks enjoyment in the glorious works of its maker, are inexpressibly captivating. The mellow dubious light that prevailed, just served to tinge with illusive colours, the softened features of the scenery. The deceived but delighted eye sought vainly to discern in the broad masses of shade, the separating line between the land and water; or to distinguish the fading objects that seemed sinking into chaos. Now did the busy fancy supply the feebleness of vision, producing with industrious craft a fairy creation of her own. Under her plastic wand the barren rocks frowned upon the watery waste, in the semblance of lofty towers and high embattled castles—trees assumed the direful forms of mighty giants, and the inaccessible summits of the mountains seemed peopled with a thousand shadowy beings.

Now broke forth from the shores the notes of an innumerable variety of insects, who filled the air with a strange but not inharmonious concert—while ever and anon was heard the melancholy plaint of the Whip-poor-will, who, perched on some lone tree, wearied the ear of night with his incessant moanings. The mind, soothed into a hallowed melancholy by the solemn mystery of the scene, listened with pensive stillness to catch and distinguish each sound, that vaguely echoed from the shore—now and then startled perchance by the whoop of some straggling savage, or the dreary

howl of some caitiff wolf, stealing forth upon his nightly prowlings.

Thus happily did they pursue their course, until they entered upon those awful defiles denominated THE HIGHLANDS, where it would seem that the gigantic Titans had erst waged their impious war with heaven, piling up cliffs on cliffs, and hurling vast masses of rock in wild confusion. But in sooth very different is the history of these cloud-capt mountains.—These in ancient days, before the Hudson poured his waters from the lakes, formed one vast prison, within whose rocky bosom the omnipotent Manetho confined the rebellious spirits who repined at his controul. Here, bound in adamantine chains, or jammed in rifted pines, or crushed by ponderous rocks, they groaned for many an age.—At length the lordly Hudson, in his irresistible career towards the ocean, burst open their prison house, rolling his tide triumphantly through its stupendous ruins.

Still however do many of them lurk about their old abodes ; and these it is, according to venerable legends, that cause the echoes which resound throughout these awful solitudes ; which are nothing but their angry clamours when any noise disturbs the profoundness of their repose.—But when the elements are agitated by tempest, when the winds are up and the thunder rolls, then horrible is the yelling and howling of these troubled

spirits—making the mountains to rebellow with their hideous uproar; for at such times it is said, they think the great Manetho is returning once more to plunge them in gloomy caverns and renew their intolerable captivity.

But all these fair and glorious scenes were lost upon the gallant Stuyvesant; naught occupied his active mind but thoughts of iron war, and proud anticipations of hardy deeds of arms. Neither did his honest crew trouble their vacant minds with any romantic speculations of the kind. The pilot at the helm quietly smoked his pipe, thinking of nothing either past present or to come—those of his comrades who were not industriously snoring under the hatches, were listening with open mouths to Antony Van Corlear; who, seated on the windlass, was relating to them the marvellous history of those myriads of fire flies, that sparkled like gems and spangles upon the dusky robe of night. These, according to tradition, were originally a race of pestilent sempiternous beldames, who peopled these parts long before the memory of man; being of that abominated race emphatically called *brimstones*; and who for their innumerable sins, against the children of men, and to furnish an awful warning to the beauteous sex, were doomed to infest the earth in the shape of these threatening and terrible little bugs; enduring the internal torments of that fire, which they formerly carried in their hearts

and breathed forth in their words ; but now are sentenced to bear about forever—in their tails !

And now am I going to tell a fact, which I doubt me much my readers will hesitate to believe ; but if they do, they are welcome not to believe a word in this whole history, for nothing which it contains is more true. It must be known then that the nose of Antony the trumpeter was of a very lusty size, strutting boldly from his countenance like a mountain of Golconda ; being sumptuously bedecked with rubies and other precious stones—the true regalia of a king of good fellows, which jolly Bacchus grants to all who bouse it heartily at the flaggon. Now thus it happened, that bright and early in the morning, the good Antony having washed his burley visage, was leaning over the quarter railing of the galley, contemplating it in the glassy wave below—Just at this moment the illustrious sun, breaking in all his splendour from behind one of the high bluffs of the Highlands, did dart one of his most potent beams full upon the refulgent nose of the sounder of brass—the reflection of which shot straightway down, hissing hot, into the water, and killed a mighty sturgeon that was sporting beside the vessel ! This huge monster being with infinite labour hoisted on board, furnished a luxurious repast to all the crew, being accounted of excellent flavour, excepting about the wound, where it smacked a little of brimstone—and this, on my veracity,

was the first time that ever sturgeon was eaten in these parts, by christian people.*

When this astonishing miracle came to be made known to Peter Stuyvesant, and that he tasted of the unknown fish, he, as may well be supposed, marvelled exceedingly; and as a monument thereof, he gave the name of *Anthony's Nose* to a stout promontory in the neighbourhood—and it has continued to be called Anthony's nose ever since that time.

But hold—Whether am I wandering?—By the mass, if I attempt to accompany the good Peter Stuyvesant on this voyage, I shall never make an end, for never was there a voyage so fraught with marvellous incidents, nor a river so abounding with transcendent beauties, worthy of being severally recorded. Even now I have it on the point of my pen to relate, how his crew were most horribly frightened, on going on shore above the highlands, by a gang of merry roystering devils, frisking and curvetting on a huge flat rock, which projected into the river—and which is called the *Duyvel's Dans-Kamer* to this very day—But no! Diedrich Knick-

* Domine Hans Megapolensis, treating of the country about Albany in a letter which was written some time after the settlement thereof, says. "There is in the river, great plenty of Sturgeon, which we christians do not make use of; but the Indians eat them greedilie."

erbocker—it becomes thee not to idle thus in thy historic way-faring.

Recollect that while dwelling with the fond garrullity of age, over these fairy scenes, endeared to thee, by the recollections of thy youth, and the charms of a thousand legendary tales which beguiled the simple ear of thy childhood ; recollect that thou art trifling with those fleeting moments which should be devoted to loftier themes.—Is not time—relentless time!—shaking with palsied hand, his almost exhausted hour glass before thee?—hasten then to pursue thy weary task, lest the last sands be run, ere thou hast finished thy renowned history of the Manhattoes.

Let us then commit the dauntless Peter, his brave galley and his loyal crew, to the protection of the blessed St. Nicholas ; who I have no doubt will prosper him in his voyage, while we await his return at the great city of New Amsterdam.

CHAP. IV.

Describing the powerful army that assembled at the city of New Amsterdam—together with the interview between Peter the Headstrong, and general Von Poffenburgh, and Peter's sentiments touching unfortunate great men.

WHILE thus the enterprizing Peter was coasting, with flowing sail up the shores of the lordly Hudson, and arousing all the phlegmatic little dutch settlements upon its borders, a great and puissant concourse of warriors was assembling at the city of New Amsterdam. And here that most invaluable fragment of antiquity, the Stuyvesant manuscript, is more than commonly particular; by which means I am enabled to record the illustrious host that encamped themselves in the public square, in front of the fort, at present denominated the Bowling Green.

In the centre then, was pitched the tent of the men of battle of the Manhattoes, who being the inmates of the metropolis, composed the life guards of the governor. These were commanded by the valiant Stoffel Brinkerhoff, who whilome had acquired such immortal fame at Oyster Bay—they displayed as a standard, a mighty beaver *rampant* on a field of orange; being the arms of the pro-

vince, and denoting the persevering industry, and the amphibious origin of the valiant *Nederlanders*.*

Then might be seen on their right hand, the vassals of that renowned Mynheer, Michael Paw,† who lorded it over the fair regions of ancient Pavonia, and the lands away south, even unto the Navesink mountains,‡ and was moreover patroon of Gibbet Island. His standard was borne by his trusty squire, Cornelius Van Vorst; consisting of a huge oyster *recumbent* upon a sea-green field; being the armorial bearings of his favourite metropolis, Communipaw. He brought to the camp a stout force of warriors, heavily armed, being each clad in ten pair of linsey woolsey breeches, and overshadowed by broad brimmed beavers, with short pipes twisted in their hatbands. These were the men who vegetated in the mud along the shores

* This was likewise the great seal of the New Netherlands, as may still be seen in ancient records.

† Besides what is mentioned by the Stuyvesant MS. I have found mention made of this illustrious Patroon in another manuscript, which says: "De Heer (or the Squire) Michael Paw, a dutch subject, about 10th Aug. 1630, by deed purchased Staten Island. N. B. The same Michael Paw had what the dutch call a colonie at Pavonia, on the Jersey shore opposite New York, and his overseer in 1636, was named Corns. Van Vorst—a person of same name in 1769, owned Pawles Hook, and a large farm at Pavonia, and is a lineal descendant from Van Vorst."

‡ So called from the Navesink tribe of Indians that inhabited these parts—at present they are erroneously denominated the Neversink, or Neversunk mountains.

of Pavonia; being of the race of genuine copper-heads, and were fabled to have sprung from oysters.

At a little distance was encamped the tribe of warriors who came from the neighbourhood of Hell-gate. These were commanded by the Suy Dams, and the Van Dams, most incontinent hard swearers, as their names betoken—they were terrible looking fellows, clad in broad skirted gaberdines, of that curious coloured cloth, called thunder and lightning—and bore as a standard three Devil's-darning-needles, *volant*, in a flame coloured field.

Hard by was the tent of the men of battle from the marshy borders of the Wael-bogtig,* and the country thereabouts—these were of a sour aspect, by reason that they lived on crabs which abound in these parts. They were the first institutors of that honourable order of knighthood, called *Fly market shirks*, and if tradition speak true, did likewise introduce the far-famed step in dancing, called “double trouble.” They were commanded by the fearless Jacobus Varra Vanger, and had moreover, a jolly band of Brooklyn ferry-men, who performed a brave concerto on conch shells.

But I refrain from pursuing this minute description, which goes on to describe the warriors of Bloemen dael, and Wee-hawk, and Hoboken, and

* I. E. The *Winding Bay*, named from the winding of its shores. This has since been corrupted by the vulgar into the *Wall about*, and is the basin which shelters our infant navy.

sundry other places, well known in history and song—for now does the sound of martial music alarm the people of New Amsterdam, sounding afar from beyond the walls of the city. But this alarm was in a little while relieved, for lo, from the midst of a vast cloud of dust, they recognized the brimstone coloured breeches, and splendid silver leg of Peter Stuyvesant, glaring in the sun beams; and beheld him approaching at the head of a formidable army, which he had mustered along the banks of the Hudson. And here the excellent, but anonymous writer of the Stuyvesant manuscript breaks out into a brave and glorious description of the forces, as they defiled through the principal gate of the city, that stood by the head of wall street.

First of all came the Van Bummels who inhabit the pleasant borders of the Bronx—These were short fat men, wearing exceeding large trunk breeches, and are renowned for feats of the trencher—they were the first inventors of Suppaw or Mush and milk—Close in their rear marched the Van Vlotens of Kaats kill, most horrible quaffers of new cyder, and arrant braggarts in their liquor—After them came the famous Van Pelts of Esopus, dextrous horsemen, mounted upon goodly switch tailed steeds of the Esopus breed—these were mighty hunters of minks and musk rats, whence came the word *Peltry*—Then the Van Nests of Kinderhook, valiant robbers of birds nests,

as their name denotes ; to these if report may be believed, are we indebted for the invention of slap jacks, or buck-wheat cakes.—Then the Van Grolls of Anthony's Nose, who carried their liquor in fair round little pottles, by reason they could not bouse it out of their canteens, having such rare long noses.—Then the Gardeniers of Hudson and thereabouts, distinguished by many triumphant feats, such as robbing water melon patches, smoking rabbits out of their holes and the like ; and by being great lovers of roasted pigs tails ; these were the ancestors of the renowned congress man of that name.—Then the Van Hoesens of Sing-Sing, great choristers and players upon the jews harp ; these marched two and two, singing the great song of St. Nicholas.—Then the Counhovens, of Sleepy Hollow, these gave birth to a jolly race of publicans, who first discovered the magic artifice of conjuring a quart of wine into a pint bottle.---Then the Van Courtlandts who lived on the wild banks of the Croton, and were great killers of wild ducks, being much spoken of for their skill in shooting with the long bow.—Then the Bunschotens of Nyack and Kakiat who were the first that did ever kick with the left foot ; they were gallant bush-whackers and hunters of racoons by moon-light.—Then the Van Winkles of Haerlem, potent suckers of eggs, and noted for running of horses and running up of scores at taverns ; they were the first that ever winked with both eyes

at once.—Lastly came the **KNICKERBOCKERS** of the great town of Scaghtikoke, where the folk lay stones upon the houses in windy weather, lest they should be blown away. These derive their name, as some say, from *Knicker* to shake, and *Beker* a goblet, indicating thereby that they were sturdy toss pots of yore; but in truth it was derived from *Knicker* to nod, and *Boeken* books; plainly meaning that they were great noddors or dozers over books—from them did descend the writer of this History.

Such was the legion of sturdy bush beaters that poured into the grand gate of New Amsterdam; the Stuyvesant manuscript indeed speaks of many more, whose names I omit to mention, seeing that it behoves me to hasten to matters of greater moment. Nothing could surpass the joy and martial pride of the lion hearted Peter as he reviewed this mighty host of warriors, and he determined no longer to defer the gratification of his much wished for revenge, upon the scoundrel Swedes at Fort Casimer.

But before I hasten on to record those unmatchable events, which will be found in the sequel of this renowned history, let me pause to notice the fate of Jacobus Von Poffenburgh, the discomfited commander in chief of the armies of the New Netherlands. Such is the inherent uncharitableness of human nature, that scarcely did the news become public of his deplorable discomfiture at Fort Casi-

mer ; than a thousand scurvy rumours were set afloat in New Amsterdam, wherein it was insinuated, that he had in reality a treacherous understanding with the Swedish commander ; that he had long been in the practice of privately communicating with the Swedes, together with divers hints about " secret service money"—To all which deadly charges I do not give a jot more credit—than I think they deserve.

Certain it is, that the general vindicated his character by the most vehement oaths and protestations, and put every man out of the ranks of honour who dared to doubt his integrity. Moreover on returning to New Amsterdam, he paraded up and down the streets with a crew of hard swearers at his heels—sturdy bottle companions, whom he gorged and fattened, and who were ready to bolster him through all the courts of justice—Heroes of his own kidney, fierce whiskered, broad shouldered, colbrand looking swaggerers—not one of whom but looked as if he could eat up an ox, and pick his teeth with the horns. These life guard men quarreled all his quarrels, were ready to fight all his battles, and scowled at every man that turned up his nose at the general, as though they would devour him alive. Their conversation was interspersed with oaths like minute guns ; and every bombastic rodomontade was rounded off by a thun-

dering execration, like a patriotic toast honoured with a discharge of artillery.

All these valorous vapourings had a considerable effect in convincing certain profound sages, many of whom began to think the general a hero of most unutterable loftiness and magnanimity of soul, particularly as he was continually protesting *on the honour of a soldier*—a marvelously high sounding asseveration. Nay one of the members of the council went so far as to propose they should immortalize him by an imperishable statue of plaster of Paris!

But the vigilant Peter the Headstrong was not thus to be deceived—Sending privately for the commander in chief of all the armies, and having heard all his story, garnished with the customary pious oaths, protestations and ejaculations—“Harkee, *Metgelsel*,” cried he, “though by your own account you are the most brave, upright and honourable man in the whole province, yet do you lie under the misfortune of being most damnably traduced, and immeasurably despised. Now though it is certainly hard to punish a man for his misfortunes, and though it is very possible you are totally innocent of the crimes laid to your charge, yet as heaven, at present, doubtless for some wise purpose, sees fit to withhold all proofs of your innocence, far be it from me to counteract its sovereign will. Beside, I cannot consent to venture my armies with a com-

mander whom they despise, or to trust the welfare of my people to a champion whom they distrust. Retire therefore, my friend, from the irksome toils and cares of public life, with this comforting reflection—that if you are guilty, you are but enjoying your just reward—and if you are innocent, that you are not the first great and good man, who has most wrongfully been slandered and maltreated in this wicked world—doubtless to be better treated in a better world, where there shall be neither error, calumny nor persecution.—In the mean time let me never see your face again, for I have a horrible antipathy to the countenances of unfortunate great men like yourself.”

CHAP. V.

In which the Author discourses very ingenuously of himself.—After which is to be found much interesting history about Peter the Headstrong and his followers.

As my readers and myself, are about entering on as many perils and difficulties, as ever a confederacy of meddlesome knights-errant wilfully ran their heads into; it is meet that like those hardy adventurers, we should join hands, bury all differences, and swear to stand by one another, in weal or woe, to the end of the enterprize. My readers must doubtless perceive, how completely I have altered my tone and deportment, since we first set out together. I warrant they then thought me a crabbed, cynical, impertinent little son of a Dutchman; for I never gave them a civil word, nor so much as touched my beaver, when I had occasion to address them. But as we jogged along together, in the high-road of my history, I gradually began to relax, to grow more courteous, and occasionally to enter into familiar discourse, until at length I came to conceive a most social, companionable kind of regard for them. This is just my way—I am always a little cold and reserved at

first, particularly to people about whom I neither know nor care the value of a brass farthing or a Vermont bank note, and am only to be completely won by long intimacy.

Besides; why should I have been sociable to the host of how-d'ye-do acquaintances, who flocked around me at my first appearance? They were merely attracted by a new face; many of them only stared me full in the title page, and then walked off without saying a word; while others lingered yawningly through the preface, and having gratified their short-lived curiosity, soon dropped off one by one.—But more especially to try their mettle, I had recourse to an expedient, similar to one which we are told was used, by that peerless flower of chivalry, king Arthur; who before he admitted any knight to his intimacy, first required that he should shew himself superior to danger or hardships, by encountering unheard of mishaps, slaying some dozen giants, vanquishing wicked enchanters, not to say a word of dwarfs, hyppogriffs and fiery dragons. On a similar principle I cunningly led my readers, at the first sally, into two or three knotty chapters, where they were most woefully belaboured and buffeted, by a host of pagan philosophers and infidel writers. It did my midriff good, by reason of the excessive laughter into which I was thrown, at seeing the utter confusion and dismay of my valiant cavaliers—some

dropped down dead (*asleep*) on the field; others threw down my book in the middle of the first chapter, took to their heels, and never ceased scampering until they had fairly run it out of sight; when they stopped to take breath, to tell their friends what troubles they had undergone, and to warn all others from venturing on so thankless an expedition. Every page thinned my ranks more and more; and of the mighty host that first set out, but a comparatively few made shift to survive, in exceedingly battered condition, through the five introductory chapters.

What then! would you have had me take such sun shine, faint hearted recreants to my bosom, at our first acquaintance? No—no. I reserved my friendship for those who deserved it; for those who undauntedly bore me company, in despite of difficulties, dangers and fatigues. And now as to those who adhere to me at present, I take them affectionately by the hand.—Worthy and thrice beloved readers! brave and well tried comrades! who have faithfully followed my footsteps through all my wanderings—I salute you from my heart—I pledge myself to stand by you to the last; and to conduct you, (so heaven speed this trusty weapon which I now hold between my fingers,) triumphantly to the end of this our stupendous undertaking.

But hark! while we are thus talking, the city

of New Amsterdam is in a constant bustle. The gallant host of warriors encamped in the bowling green are striking their tents; the brazen trumpet of Antony Van Corlear makes the welkin to resound with portentous clangour—the drums beat—the standards of the Manhattoes, of Hell-gate and of Michael Paw wave proudly in the air. And now behold where the mariners are busily prepared, hoisting the sails of yon top sail schooner, and those two clump built Albany sloops, which are to waft the army of the Nederlanders to gather immortal laurels on the Delaware!

The entire population of the city, man woman and child, turned out to behold the chivalry of New Amsterdam, as it paraded the streets previous to embarkation. Many a dirty pocket handkerchief was waved out of the windows; many a fair nose was blown in melodious sorrow, on the mournful occasion. The grief of the fair dames and beauteous damsels of Grenada, could not have been more vociferous on the banishment of the gallant tribe of Abencerrages, than was that of the kind hearted *Yfrouws* of New Amsterdam, on the departure of their intrepid warriors. Every love sick maiden fondly crammed the pockets of her hero with gingerbread and dough-nuts—many a copper ring was exchanged and crooked sixpence broken, in pledge of eternal constancy—and there remain extant to this day, some love verses written on that occasion, suf-

ficiently crabbed and incomprehensible to confound the whole universe.

But it was a moving sight to see the buxom lasses, how they hung about the doughty Antony Van Corlear—for he was a jolly, rosy faced, lusty bachelor, and withal a great royster, fond of his joke and a desperate rogue among the women. Fain would they have kept him to comfort them while the army was away; for besides what I have said of him, it is no more than justice to add, that he was a kind hearted soul, noted for his benevolent attentions in comforting disconsolate wives during the absence of their husbands—and this made him to be very much regarded by the honest burghers of the city. But nothing could keep the valiant Antony from following the heels of the old governor, whom he loved as he did his very soul—so embracing all the young vrouws and giving every one of them that had good teeth and a clean mouth, a dozen hearty smacks—he departed loaded with their kind wishes.

Nor was the departure of the gallant Peter among the least causes of public distress. Though the old governor was by no means indulgent to the follies and waywardness of his subjects; and had turned over a complete “new leaf,” from that which was presented in the days of William the Testy, yet some how or another he had become strangely popular among the people. There is something so

captivating in personal bravery, that, with the common mass of mankind, it takes the lead of most other merits. The simple folk of New Amsterdam looked upon Peter Stuyvesant, as a prodigy of valour. His wooden leg, that trophy of his martial encounters, was regarded with reverence and admiration. Every old burgher had a budget of miraculous stories to tell about the exploits of Hardkoppig Piet, wherewith he regaled his children, of a long winter night, and on which he dwelt with as much delight and exaggeration, as do our honest country yeomen on the hardy adventures of old general Putnam (or as he is familiarly termed *Old Put*,) during our glorious revolution—Not an individual but verily believed the old governor was a match for Belzebub himself; and there was even a story told with great mystery, and under the rose, of his having shot the devil with a silver bullet one dark stormy night, as he was sailing in a canoe through Hell-gate—But this I do not record as being an absolute fact—perish the man, who would let fall a drop that should discolour the pure stream of history!

Certain it is, not an old woman in New Amsterdam, but considered Peter Stuyvesant as a tower of strength, and rested satisfied, that the public welfare was secure as long as he was in the city. It is not surprising then that they looked upon his departure as a sore affliction. With heavy hearts

they draggled at the heels of his troop, as they marched down to the river side to embark. The governor from the stern of his schooner, gave a short, but truly patriarchal address to his citizens; wherein he recommended them to comport like loyal and peaceful subjects—to go to church regularly on sundays, and to mind their business all the week besides—That the women should be dutiful and affectionate to their husbands—looking after no bodies concerns but their own: eschewing all gossippings, and morning gaddings—and carrying short tongues and long petticoats. That the men should abstain from ward meetings and porter houses, entrusting the cares of government to the officers appointed to support them—staying home, like good citizens, making money for themselves, and getting children for the benefit of their country. That the burgomasters should look well to the public interest—not oppressing the poor, nor indulging the rich—not tasking their sagacity to devise new laws, but faithfully enforcing those which were already made—rather bending their attention to prevent evil than to punish it; ever recollecting that civil magistrates should consider themselves more as guardians of public morals, than rat catchers employed to entrap public delinquents. Finally, he exhorted them, one and all, high and low, rich and poor, to conduct themselves *as well as they could*; assuring them that if they

faithfully and conscientiously complied with this golden rule there was no danger but that they would all conduct themselves well enough.—This done he gave them a paternal benediction; the sturdy Antony sounded a most loving farewell with his trumpet, the jolly crews put up a lusty shout of triumph, and the invincible armada swept off proudly down the bay.

The good people of New Amsterdam crowded down to the Battery—that blest resort, from whence so many a tender prayer has been wafted, so many a fair hand waved, so many a tearful look been cast by lovesick damsel, after the lessening bark, which bore her adventurous swain to distant climes!—Here the populace watched with straining eyes the gallant squadron, as it slowly floated down the bay, and when the intervening land at the Narrows shut it from their sight, gradually dispersed with silent tongues and downcast countenances.

A heavy gloom hung over the late bustling city—The honest burghers smoked their pipes in profound thoughtfulness, casting many a wistful look to the weather cock, on the church of St. Nicholas, and all the old women, having no longer the presence of Hard-koppig Piet to hearten them, gathered their children home, and barricadoed the doors and windows every evening at sun down.

In the mean while the armada of the sturdy Peter proceeded prosperously on its voyage, and after encountering about as many storms and water spouts and whales and other horrors and phenomena, as generally befall adventurous landsmen, in perilous voyages of the kind; after undergoing a severe scouring from that deplorable and unpitied malady called sea sickness; and suffering from a little touch of constipation or dyspepsy, which was cured by a box of Anderson's pills, the whole squadron arrived safely in the Delaware.

Without so much as dropping anchor and giving his wearied ships time to breathe after labouring so long in the ocean, the intrepid Peter pursued his course up the Delaware, and made a sudden appearance before Fort Casimer. Having summoned the astonished garrison by a terrific blast from the trumpet of the long winded Van Corlear, he demanded, in a tone of thunder, an instant surrender of the fort. To this demand Suen Scutz, the wind dried commandant, replied in a shrill, whiffling voice, which by reason of his extreme spareness, sounded like the wind whistling through a broken bellows—"that he had no very strong reasons for refusing, except that the demand was particularly disagreeable, as he had been ordered to maintain his post to the last extremity." He requested time therefore, to consult with governor Risingh, and proposed a truce for that purpose

The choleric Peter, indignant at having his rightful fort so treacherously taken from him, and thus pertinaceously withheld; refused the proposed armistice, and swore by the pipe of St. Nicholas, which like the sacred fire was never extinguished, that unless the fort was surrendered in ten minutes, he would incontinently storm the works, make all the garrison run the gauntlet, and split their scoundrel of a commander, like a pickled shad. To give this menace the greater effect, he drew forth his trusty sword, and shook it at them with such a fierce and vigorous motion, that doubtless, if it had not been exceedingly rusty, it would have lightened terror into the eyes and hearts of the enemy. He then ordered his men to bring a broadside to bear upon the fort, consisting of two swivels, three muskets, a long duck fowling piece and two brace of horse pistols.

In the mean time the sturdy Van Corlear marshalled all his forces, and commenced his war-like operations.—Distending his cheeks like a very Boreas, he kept up a most horrific twanging of his trumpet—the lusty choristers of Sing-Sing broke forth into a hideous song of battle—the warriors of Brooklyn and the Wael bogtig blew a potent and astounding blast on their conch shells, all together forming as outrageous a concerto, as though five thousand French orchestras were displaying their skill in a modern overture—at the hearing of

which I warrant me not a Swede in the fortress but felt himself literally distilling away, with pure affright and bad music.

Whether the formidable front of war thus suddenly presented, smote the garrison with sore dismay—or whether the concluding terms of the summons, which mentioned that he should surrender *at discretion*, were mistaken by Suen Scutz, who though a Swede, was a very considerate easy tempered man—as a compliment to his discretion, I will not take upon me to say; certain it is, he found it impossible to resist so courteous a demand. Accordingly, in the very nick of time, just as the cabin boy had gone after a coal of fire, to discharge the swivels, a chamade was beat on the rampart, by the only drum in the garrison, to the no small satisfaction of both parties; who, notwithstanding their great stomach for fighting, had full as good an inclination, to eat a quiet dinner, as to exchange black eyes and bloody noses.

Thus did this impregnable fortress, once more return to the domination of their high mightinesses; Scutz, and his garrison of twenty men, were allowed to march out with the honours of war, and the victorious Peter, who was as generous as brave, permitted them to keep possession of all their arms and ammunition—the same on inspection being found totally unfit for service, having long rusted in the magazine of the fortress, even before it was wrested by

the Swedes from the magnanimous, but windy Von Poffenburgh. But I must not omit to mention, that the governor was so well pleased with the services of his faithful squire Van Corlear, in the reduction of this great fortress, that he made him on the spot, lord of a goodly domain in the vicinity of New Amsterdam—which goes by the name of Corlear's Hook, unto this very day.*

The unexampled liberality of the valiant Stuyvesant, towards the Swedes, who certainly had used his government very scurvily—occasioned great surprize in the city of New Amsterdam—nay, certain of those factious individuals, who had been enlightened by the political meetings, that prevailed during the days of William the Testy—but who had not dared to indulge their meddlesome habits, under the eye of their present ruler; now emboldened by his absence, dared even to give vent to their censures in the streets—Murmurs, equally loud with those uttered by that nation of genuine grumblers, the British, in consequence of the convention of Portugal; were heard in the very council chamber of New Amsterdam; and there is no knowing whether they would not have broken

* De Vriez, makes mention in one of his voyages of *Corlears Hoek*, and *Corlears Plantagie*, or *Bowery*; and that too, at an earlier date than the one given by Mr. Knickerbocker—De Vriez, is no doubt a little incorrect in this particular. EDITOR.

out into downright speeches and invectives, had not the sturdy Peter, privately sent home his walking staff, to be laid as a mace, on the table of the council chamber, in the midst of, his councillors; who, like wise men took the hint, and forever after held their peace.

CHAP. VI.

In which is shewn the great advantage the Author has over his reader in time of battle—together with divers portentous movements—which betoken that something terrible is about to happen.

“**STRIKE** while the Iron is hot,” was a favourite saying of Peter the Great, while an apprentice in a blacksmith’s shop, at Amsterdam. It is one of those proverbial sayings, which speak a word to the ear, but a volume to the understanding—and contain a world of wisdom, condensed within a narrow compass—Thus every art and profession has thrown a gem of the kind, into the public stock, enriching society by some sage maxim and pithy apothegm drawn from its own experience ; in which is conveyed, not only the arcana of that individual art or profession, but also the important secret of a prosperous and happy life. “Cut your coat according to your cloth,” says the taylor—“Stick to your last,” cries the cobbler—“Make hay while the sun shines,” says the farmer—“Prevention is better than cure,” hints the physician—Surely a man has but to travel through the world, with open ears, and by the time he is grey, he will have all the wisdom of Solomon—and then he has nothing to

do but to grow young again, and turn it to the best advantage.

“Strike while the Iron is hot,” was not more invariably the saying of Peter the great, than it was the practice of Peter the Headstrong. Like as a mighty alderman, when at a corporation feast the first spoonful of turtle soup salutes his palate, feels his impatient appetite but ten fold quickened, and redoubles his vigorous attacks upon the tureen, while his voracious eyes, projecting from his head, roll greedily round devouring every thing at table—so did the mettlesome Peter Stuyvesant, feel that intolerable hunger for martial glory, which raged within his very bowels, inflamed by the capture of Fort Casimer, and nothing could allay it, but the conquest of all New Sweden. No sooner therefore had he secured his conquest, than he stumped resolutely on, flushed with success, to gather fresh laurels at Fort Christina.*

This was the grand Swedish post, established on a small river (or as it is termed, creek,) of the same name, which empties into the Delaware; and here that crafty governor Jan Risingh, like another Charles the twelfth, commanded his subjects in person.

* The formidable fortress and metropolis to which Mr. Knickerbocker alludes, is at present a flourishing little town called Christiana, about thirty seven miles from Philadelphia, on your route to Baltimore.—EDITOR.

Thus have I fairly pitted two of the most potent chieftans that ever this country beheld, against each other, and what will be the result of their contest, I am equally anxious with my readers to ascertain. This will doubtless appear a paradox to such of them, as do not know the way in which I write. The fact is, that as I am not engaged in a work of imagination, but a faithful and veritable history, it is not necessary, that I should trouble my head, by anticipating its incidents and catastrophe. On the contrary, I generally make it a rule, not to examine the annals of the times whereof I treat, further than exactly a page in advance of my own work ; hence I am equally interested in the progress of my history, with him who reads it, and equally unconscious, what occurrence is next to happen. Darkness and doubt hang over each coming chapter—with trembling pen and anxious mind I conduct my beloved native city through the dangers and difficulties, with which it is continually surrounded ; and in treating of my favourite hero, the gallant Peter Stuyvesant, I often shrink back with dismay, as I turn another page, lest I should find his undaunted spirit hurrying him into some dolorous misadventure.

Thus am I situated at present. I have just conducted him into the very teeth of peril—nor can I tell, any more than my reader, what will be the issue of this horrid din of arms, with which our

ears are mutually assailed. It is true, I possess one advantage over my reader, which tends marvelously to soothe my apprehensions—which is, that though I cannot save the life of my favourite hero, nor absolutely contradict the event of a battle, (both of which misrepresentations, though much practised by the French writers, of the present reign, I hold to be utterly unworthy of a scrupulous historian) yet I can now and then make him bestow on his enemy a sturdy back stroke, sufficient to fell a giant; though in honest truth he may never have done any thing of the kind—or I can drive his antagonist clear round and round the field, as did Dan Homer most falsely make that fine fellow Hector scamper like a poltroon around the walls of Troy; for which in my humble opinion the prince of Poets, deserved to have his head broken—as no doubt he would, had those terrible fellows the Edinburgh reviewers, existed in those days—or if my hero should be pushed too hard by his opponent, I can just step in, and with one dash of my pen, give him a hearty thwack over the scone, that would have cracked the scull of Hercules himself—like a faithful second in boxing, who when he sees his principal down, and likely to be worsted, puts in a sly blow, that knocks the wind out of his adversary, and changes the whole state of the contest.

I am aware that many conscientious readers will be ready to cry out “foul play!” whenever I

render such assistance—but I insist that it is one of those little privileges, strenuously asserted and exercised by historiographers of all ages—and one which has never been disputed. An historian, in fact, is in some measure bound in honour to stand by his hero—the fame of the latter is entrusted to his hands, and it is his duty to do the best by it he can. Never was there a general, an admiral or any other commander, who in giving an account of any battle he had fought, did not sorely belabour the enemy; and I have no doubt that, had my heroes written the history of their own achievements, they would have hit much harder blows, than any I shall recount. Standing forth therefore, as the guardian of their fame, it behoves me to do them the same justice, they would have done themselves; and if I happen to be a little hard upon the Swedes, I give free leave to any of their descendants, who may write a history of the state of Delaware, to take fair retaliation, and thump Peter Stuyvesant as hard as they please.

Therefore stand by for broken heads and bloody noses! my pen has long itched for a battle—siege after siege have I carried on, without blows or bloodshed; but now I have at length got a chance, and I vow to heaven and St. Nicholas, that, let the chronicles of the times say what they please, neither Sallust, Livy, Tacitus, Polybius, or any other battle monger of them all, did ever record a fiercer

fight, than that in which my valiant chieftans are now about to engage.

And thou, most excellent reader, who, for thy faithful adherence to my heels, I could lodge in the best parlour of my heart—be not uneasy—trust the fate of our favourite Stuyvesant to me—for by the rood, come what will, I'll stick by Hard-koppig Piet to the last; I'll make him drive about these lossels vile as did the renowned Launcelot of the lake, a herd of recreant cornish Knights—and if he does fall, let me never draw my pen to fight another battle, in behalf of a brave man, if I don't make these lubberly Swedes pay for it!

No sooner had Peter Stuyvesant arrived before fort Christina than he proceeded without delay to entrench himself, and immediately on running his first parallel, dispatched Antony Van Corlear, that incomparable trumpeter, to summon the fortress to surrender. Van Corlear was received with all due formality, hoodwinked at the portal, and conducted through a pestiferous smell of salt fish and onions, to the citadel, a substantial hut built of pine logs. His eyes were here uncovered, and he found himself in the august presence of governor Risingh, who, having been accidentally likened to Charles XII, the intelligent reader will instantly perceive, must have been a tall, robustious, able bodied, mean looking man, clad in a coarse blue coat with brass buttons, a shirt which for a week, had longed in vain

for the wash-tub, a pair of foxey coloured jack boots—and engaged in the act of shaving his grizzly beard, at a bit of broken looking glass, with a villainous patent Brummagem razor. Antony Van Corlear delivered in a few words, being a kind of short hand speaker, a long message from his excellency, recounting the whole history of the province, with a recapitulation of grievances, enumeration of claims, &c.&c. and concluding with a peremptory demand of instant surrender: which done, he turned aside, took his nose between his thumb and finger, and blew a tremendous blast, not unlike the flourish of a trumpet of defiance—which it had doubtless learned from a long and intimate neighbourhood with that melodious instrument.

Governor Risingh heard him through, trumpet and all, but with infinite impatience; leaning at times, as was his usual custom, on the pommel of his sword, and at times twirling a huge steel watch chain or snapping his fingers. Van Corlear having finished he bluntly replied, that Peter Stuyvesant and his summons might go to the D——l, whither he hoped to send him and his crew of raggamuffins before supper time. Then unsheathing his brass hilted sword, and throwing away the scabbard—“Fore gad,” quod he, “but I will not sheathe thee again, until I make a scabbard of the smoke dried leathern hide, of this runegate Dutchman.” Then having flung a fierce defiance in the teeth of his

adversary, by the lips of his messenger, the latter was reconducted to the portal, with all the ceremonious civility due to the trumpeter, squire and ambassador of so great a commander, and being again unblinded, was courteously dismissed with a tweak of the nose, to assist him in recollecting his message.

No sooner did the gallant Peter receive this insolent reply, than he let fly a tremendous volley of red hot, four and forty pounder execrations, that would infallibly have battered down the fortifications and blown up the powder magazines, about the ears of the fiery Swede, had not the ramparts been remarkably strong, and the magazine bomb proof. Perceiving that the works withstood this terrific blast, and that it was utterly impossible (as it really was in those unphilosophic days) to carry on a war with words, he ordered his merry men all, to prepare for immediate assault. But here a strange murmur broke out among his troops, beginning with the tribe of the Van Bummels, those valiant trencher men of the Bronx, and spreading from man to man, accompanied with certain mutinous looks and discontented murmurs. For once in his life, and only for once, did the great Peter turn pale, for he verily thought his warriors were going to falter in this hour of perilous trial, and thus tarnish forever the fame of the province of New Nederlands.

But soon did he discover to his great joy, that in this suspicion he deeply wronged this most undaunted army ; for the cause of this agitation and uneasiness simply was, that the hour of dinner was at hand, and it would have almost broken the hearts of these regular dutch warriors, to have broken in upon the invariable routine of their habits. Beside it was an established rule among our valiant ancestors, always to fight upon a full stomach, and to this may be doubtless attributed the circumstance that they came to be so renowned in arms.

And now are the hearty men of the Manhattoes, and their no less hearty comrades, all lustily engaged under the trees, buffeting stoutly with the contents of their wallets, and taking such affectionate embraces of their canteens and pottles, as though they verily believed they were to be the last. And as I foresee we shall have hot work in a page or two, I advise my readers to do the same, for which purpose I will bring this chapter to a close ; giving them my word of honour that no advantage shall be taken of this armistice, to surprise, or in any wise molest, the honest Nederlanders, while at their vigorous repast.

Before we part however, I have one small favour to ask of them ; which is, that when I have set both armies by the ears in the next chapter, and am hurrying about, like a very devil, in the midst— they will just stand a little on one side, out of harms

way—and on no account attempt to interrupt me by a single question or remonstrance. As the whole spirit, hurry and sublimity of the battle will depend on my exertions, the moment I should stop to speak, the whole business would stand still—wherefore I shall not be able to say a word to my readers, throughout the whole of the next chapter, but I promise them in the one after, I'll listen to all they have to say, and answer any questions they may ask.

CHAP. VII.

Containing the most horrible battle ever recorded in poetry or prose; with the admirable exploits of Peter the Headstrong.

“ Now had the Dutchmen snatch’d a huge repast,” and finding themselves wonderfully encouraged and animated thereby, prepared to take the field. Expectation, says a faithful matter of fact dutch poet, whose works were unfortunately destroyed in the conflagration of the Alexandrian library—Expectation now stood on stilts. The world forgot to turn round, or rather stood still, that it might witness the affray; like a fat round bellied alderman, watching the combat of two chivalric flies upon his jerkin. The eyes of all mankind, as usual in such cases, were turned upon Fort Christina. The sun, like a little man in a crowd, at a puppet shew, scampered about the heavens, popping his head here and there, and endeavouring to get a peep between the unmannerly clouds, that obtruded themselves in his way. The historians filled their ink-horns—the poets went without their dinners, either that they might buy paper and goose-quills, or because they could not get any thing to eat—antiquity scowled sulkily out of its grave, to see itself out-

done—while even posterity stood mute, gazing in gaping extacy of retrospection; on the eventful field!

The immortal deities, who whilome had seen service at the “affair” of Troy—now mounted their feather-bed clouds, and sailed over the plain, or mingled among the combatants in different disguises, all itching to have a finger in the pie. Jupiter sent off his thunderbolt to a noted copper-smiths, to have it furbished up for the direful occasion. Venus, swore by her chastity she’d patronize the Swedes, and in semblance of a blear eyed trull, paraded the battlements of Fort Christina, accompanied by Diana, as a serjeant’s widow, of cracked reputation—The noted bully Mars, stuck two horse pistols into his belt, shouldered a rusty firelock, and gallantly swaggered at their elbow, as a drunken corporal—while Apollo trudged in their rear, as a bandy-legged fifer, playing most villainously out of tune.

On the other side, the ox-eyed Juno, who had won a pair of black eyes over night, in one of her curtain lectures with old Jupiter, displayed her haughty beauties on a baggage waggon—Minerva, as a brawny gin sutler, tucked up her skirts, brandished her fists, and swore most heroically, in exceeding bad dutch, (having but lately studied the language) by way of keeping up the spirits of the soldiers; while Vulcan halted as a club-footed blacksmith, lately promoted to be a captain of militia.

All was silent horror, or bustling preparation; war reared his horrid front, gnashed loud his iron fangs, and shook his direful crest of bristling bayonets.

And now the mighty chieftans marshalled out their hosts. Here stood stout Risingh, firm as a thousand rocks—encrusted with stockades, and entrenched to the chin in mud batteries—His artillery consisting of two swivels and a caronade, loaded to the muzzle, the touch holes primed, and a whiskerd bombardier stationed at each, with lighted match in hand, waiting the word. His valiant infantry, that had never turned back upon an enemy (having never seen any before)—lined the breast work in grim array, each having his mustachios fiercely greased, and his hair pomatomed back, and queued so stiffly, that he grinned above the ram-parts like a grizly death's head.

There came on the intrepid Hard-koppig Piet,—a second Bayard, without fear or reproach—his brows knit, his teeth clenched, his breath held hard, rushing on like ten thousand bellowing bulls of Bashan. His faithful squire Van Corlear, trudging valiantly at his heels, with his trumpet gorgeously bedecked with red and yellow ribbands, the remembrances of his fair mistresses at the Manhat-toes. Then came waddling on his sturdy comrades, swarming like the myrmidons of Achilles. There were the Van Wycks and the Van Dycks and the Ten Eycks—the Van Nesses the Van

Tassels, the Van Grolls; the Van Hæsens; the Van Giesons, and the Van Blarcoms—The Van Warts, the Van Winkles, the Van Dams; the Van Pelts, the Van Rippers, and the Van Brunts.—There were the Van Horns, the Van Borsums, the Van Bunschotens; the Van Gelders, the Van Arsdale, and the Van Bummels—The Vander Belts, the Vander Hoofs, the Vander Voorts, the Vander Lyns, the Vander Pools and the Vander Spiegels.—There came the Hoffmans, the Hooglands, the Hoppers, the Cloppers, the Oothouts, the Quackenbosses, the Roerbacks, the Garrebrantz, the Onderdonks, the Varra Vangers, the Schermerhornis, the Brinkerhoffs, the Bontecous, the Knickerbockers, the Hockstrassers, the Ten Breecheses and the Tough Breecheses, with a host more of valiant worthies, whose names are too crabbed to be written, or if they could be written, it would be impossible for man to utter—all fortified with a mighty dinner, and to use the words of a great Dutch poet

—“Brimful of wrath and cabbage!”

For an instant the mighty Peter paused in the midst of his career, and mounting on a rotten stump addressed his troops in eloquent low dutch, exhorting them to fight like *duyvels*, and assuring them that if they conquered, they should get plenty of booty—if they fell they should be allowed the

unparalleled satisfaction, while dying, of reflecting that it was in the service of their country—and after they were dead, of seeing their names inscribed in the temple of renown and handed down, in company with all the other great men of the year, for the admiration of posterity.—Finally he swore to them, on the word of a governor (and they knew him too well to doubt it for a moment) that if he caught any mother's son of them looking pale, or playing craven, he'd curry his hide till he made him run out of it like a snake in spring time.—Then lugging out his direful snickersnee, he brandished it three times over his head, ordered Van Corlear to sound a tremendous charge, and shouting the word "St. Nicholas and the Manhattoes!" courageously dashed forwards. His warlike followers, who had employed the interval in lighting their pipes, instantly stuck them in their mouths, gave a furious puff, and charged gallantly, under cover of the smoke.

The Swedish garrison, ordered by the cunning Risingh not to fire until they could distinguish the whites of their assailants' eyes, stood in horrid silence on the covert-way; until the eager dutchmen had half ascended the glacis. Then did they pour into them such a tremendous volley, that the very hills quaked around, and were terrified even unto an incontinence of water, insomuch that certain springs burst forth from their sides, which

continue to run unto the present day. Not a dutchman but would have bit the dust, beneath that dreadful fire, had not the protecting Minerva kindly taken care, that the Swedes should one and all, observe their usual custom of shutting their eyes and turning away their heads, at the moment of discharge.

But were not the muskets levelled in vain, for the balls, winged with unerring fate, went point blank into a flock of wild geese, which, like geese as they were, happened at that moment to be flying past—and brought down seventy dozen of them—which furnished a luxurious supper to the conquerors, being well seasoned and stuffed with onions.

Neither was the volley useless to the musquetiers, for the hostile wind, commissioned by the implacable Juno, carried the smoke and dust full in the faces of the dutchmen, and would inevitably have blinded them, had their eyes been open. The Swedes followed up their fire, by leaping the counterscarp, and falling tooth and nail upon the foe, with furious outcries. And now might be seen prodigies of valour, of which neither history nor song have ever recorded a parallel. Here was beheld the sturdy Stoffel Brinkerhoff brandishing his lusty quarter staff, like the terrible giant Blanderon his oak tree (for he scorned to carry any other weapon,) and drumming a horrific tune upon the heads of whole squadrons of Swedes. There were the crafty

Van Courtlandts, posted at a distance, like the little Locrian archers of yore, and plying it most potently with the long bow, for which they were so justly renowned. At another place were collected on a rising knoll the valiant men of Sing-Sing, who assisted marvellously in the fight, by chaunting forth the great song of St. Nicholas. In a different part of the field might be seen the Van Grolls of Anthony's nose; but they were horribly perplexed in a defile between two little hills, by reason of the length of their noses. There were the Van Bunschotens of Nyack and Kakiat, so renowned for kicking with the left foot, but their skill availed them little at present, being short of wind in consequence of the hearty dinner they had eaten—and they would irretrievably have been put to rout, had they not been reinforced by a gallant corps of *Voltigeurs* composed of the Hoppers, who advanced to their assistance nimbly on one foot. At another place might you see the Van Arsdales, and the Van Bummels, who ever went together, gallantly pressing forward to bombard the fortress—but as to the Gardeniers of Hudson, they were absent from the battle, having been sent on a marauding party, to lay waste the neighbouring water-melon patches. Nor must I omit to mention the incomparable atchievement of Antony Van Corlear, who, for a good quarter of an hour waged horrid fight with a little pursy Swedish drummer, whose hide he drummed most

magnificently ; and had he not come into the battle with no other weapon but his trumpet, would infallibly have put him to an untimely end.

But now the combat thickened—on came the mighty Jacobus Varra Vanger and the fighting men of the Wael Bogtig ; after them thundered the Van Pelts of Esopus, together with the Van Rippers and the Van Brunts, bearing down all before them—then the Suy Dams and the Van Dams, pressing forward with many a blustering oath, at the head of the warriors of Hell-gate, clad in their thunder and lighting gaberdines ; and lastly the standard bearers and body guards of Peter Stuyvesant, bearing the great beaver of the Manhattoes.

And now commenced the horrid din, the desperate struggle, the maddening ferocity, the frantic desperation, the confusion and self abandonment of war: Dutchman and Swede commingled, tugged, panted and blowed. The heavens were darkened with a tempest of missives. Carcasses, fire balls, smoke balls, stink balls and hand grenades, jostling each other, in the air. Bang ! went the guns—whack ! struck the broad swords—thump ! went the cudgels—crash ! went the musket stocks—blows—kicks—cuffs—scratches—black eyes and bloody noses swelling the horrors of the scene ! Thick-thwack, cut and hack, helter-skelter, higgledy-piggledy, hurley-burley, head over heels, klip-klap, slag op slag, hob over bol, rough and tumble !———Dunder

and blixum! swore the dutchmen, splitter and splutter! cried the Swedes—Storm the works! shouted Hard-koppig Piet—fire the mine! roared stout Risingh—Tantara-ra-ra! twang'd the trumpet of Antony Van Corlear—until all voice and sound became unintelligible—grunts of pain, yells of fury, and shouts of triumph commingling in one hideous clamour. The earth shook as if struck with a paralytic stroke—The trees shrunk aghast, and wilted at the sight—The rocks burrowed in the ground like rabbits, and even Christina creek turned from its course, and ran up a mountain in breathless terror!

Nothing, save the dullness of their weapons, the damaged condition of their powder, and the singular accident of one and all striking with the flat instead of the edge of their swords, could have prevented a most horrible carnage—As it was, the sweat prodigiously streaming, ran in rivers on the field, fortunately without drowning a soul, the combatants being to a man, expert swimmers, and furnished with cork jackets for the occasion—but many a valiant head was broken, many a stubborn rib belaboured, and many a broken-winded hero drew short breath that day!

Long hung the contest doubtful, for though a heavy shower of rain, sent by the “cloud compelling Jove,” in some measure cooled their ardour, as doth a bucket of water thrown on a group of fighting mastiffs, yet did they but pause for a moment,

to return with tenfold fury to the charge, belabouring each other with black and bloody bruises. Just at this juncture was seen a vast and dense column of smoke, slowly rolling towards the scene of battle, which for a while made even the furious combatants to stay their arms in mute astonishment—but the wind for a moment dispersing the murky cloud, from the midst thereof emerged the flaunting banner of the immortal Michael Paw. This noble chieftain came fearlessly on, leading a solid phalanx of oyster-fed Pavonians, who had remained behind, partly as a *corps de reserve*, and partly to digest the enormous dinner they had eaten. These sturdy yeomen, nothing daunted, did trudge manfully forward, smoaking their pipes with outrageous vigour, so as to raise the awful cloud that has been mentioned; but marching exceedingly slow, being short of leg and of great rotundity in the belt.

And now the protecting deities of the army of New Amsterdam, having unthinkingly left the field and stept into a neighbouring tavern to refresh themselves with a pot of beer, a direful catastrophe had well nigh chanced to befall the Nederlanders. Scarcely had the myrmidons of the puissant Paw attained the front of battle, before the Swedes, instructed by the cunning Risingh, levell'd a shower of blows, full at their tobacco pipes. Astounded at this unexpected assault, and totally

discomfited at seeing their pipes broken by this "d--d nonsense," the valiant dutchmen fall in vast confusion--already they begin to fly--like a frightened drove of unwieldy Elephants they throw their own army in an uproar--bearing down a whole legion of little Hoppers--the sacred banner on which is blazoned the gigantic oyster of Communipaw is trampled in the dirt--The Swedes pluck up new spirits and pressing on their rear, apply their feet *a parte poste* with a vigour that prodigiously accelerates their motions--nor doth the renowned Paw himself, fail to receive divers grievous and intolerable visitations of shoe leather !

But what, Oh muse ! was the rage of the gallant Peter, when from afar he saw his army yield ? With a voice of thunder did he roar after his recreant warriors, putting up such a war whoop, as did the stern Achilles, when the Trojan troops were on the point of burning all his gunboats. The dreadful shout rung in long echoes through the woods--trees toppled at the noise ; bears, wolves and panthers jumped out of their skins, in pure affright ; several wild looking hills bounced clear over the Delaware ; and all the small beer in Fort Christina, turned sour at the sound !

The men of the Manhattoes plucked up new courage when they heard their leader--or rather they dreaded his fierce displeasure, of which they stood in more awe than of all the Swedes in Chris-

tendom—but the daring Peter, not waiting for their aid, plunged sword in hand, into the thickest of the foe. Then did he display some such incredible achievements, as have never been known since the miraculous days of the giants. Wherever he went the enemy shrunk before him—with fierce impetuosity he pushed forward, driving the Swedes, like dogs, into their own ditch—but as he fearlessly advanced, the foe, like rushing waves which close upon the scudding bark, thronged in his rear, and hung upon his flank with fearful peril. One desperate Swede, who had a mighty heart, almost as large as a pepper corn, drove his dastard sword full at the hero's heart. But the protecting power that watches over the safety of all great and good men turned aside the hostile blade, and directed it to a large side pocket, where reposed an enormous Iron Tobacco Box, endowed like the shield of Achilles with supernatural powers—no doubt in consequence of its being piously decorated with a portrait of the blessed St. Nicholas. Thus was the dreadful blow repelled, but not without occasioning to the great Peter a fearful loss of wind.

Like as a furious bear, when gored by worrying curs, turns fiercely round, shews his dread teeth, and springs upon the foe, so did our hero turn upon the treacherous Swede. The miserable varlet sought in flight, for safety—but the active Peter, seizing him by an immeasurable queue, that dangled

from his head—" Ah Whoreson Caterpillar !" roared he, " here is what shall make dog's meat of thee !" So saying he whirled his trusty sword, and made a blow, that would have decapitated him, had he, like Briareus, half a hundred heads, but that the pitying steel struck short and shaved the queue forever from his crown. At this very moment a cunning arquebusier, perched on the summit of a neighbouring mound, levelled his deadly instrument, and would have sent the gallant Stuyvesant, a wailing ghost to haunt the Stygian shore—had not the watchful Minerva, who had just stopped to tie up her garter, saw the great peril of her favourite chief, and dispatched old Boreas with his bellows ; who in the very nick of time, just as the direful match descended to the pan, gave such a lucky blast, as blew all the priming from the touch hole !

Thus waged the horrid fight—when the stout Risingh, surveying the battle from the top of a little ravelin, perceived his faithful troops, banged, beaten and kicked by the invincible Peter. Language cannot describe the choler with which he was seized at the sight—he only stopped for a moment to disburthen himself of five thousand anathemas ; and then drawing his immeasurable cheese toaster, straddled down to the field of combat, with some such thundering strides, as Jupiter is said by old Hesiod to have taken, when he strode down the spheres, to play off his sky rockets at the Titans.

No sooner did these two rival heroes come face to face, than they each made a prodigious start of fifty feet, (flemish measure) such as is made by your most experienced stage champions. Then did they regard each other for a moment, with bitter aspect, like two furious ram cats, on the very point of a clapper clawing. Then did they throw themselves in one attitude, then in another, striking their swords on the ground, first on the right side, then on the left, at last at it they went, like five hundred houses on fire! Words cannot tell the prodigies of strength and valour, displayed in this direful encounter—an encounter, compared to which the far famed battles of Ajax with Hector, of Eneas with Turnus, Orlando with Rodomont, Guy of Warwick with Colbrand the Dane, or of that renowned Welsh Knight Sir Owen of the mountains with the giant Guyton, were all gentle sports and holliday recreations. At length the valiant Peter watching his opportunity, aimed a fearful blow with the full intention of cleaving his adversary to the very chine; but Risingh nimbly raising his sword, warded it off so narrowly, that glancing on one side, it shaved away a huge canteen full of fourth proof brandy, that he always carried swung on one side; thence pursuing its tranchant course, it severed off a deep coat pocket, stored with bread and cheese—all which dainties rolling among the armies, occasioned a fearful scrambling between the Swedes and Dutchmen, and made the

general battle to wax ten times more furious than ever.

Enraged to see his military stores thus woefully laid waste, the stout Risingh collecting all his forces, aimed a mighty blow, full at the hero's crest. In vain did his fierce little cocked hat oppose its course; the biting steel clove through the stubborn ram beaver, and would infallibly have cracked his gallant crown, but that the scull was of such adamantine hardness that the brittle weapon shivered into five and twenty pieces, shedding a thousand sparks, like beams of glory, round his grizly visage.

Stunned with the blow the valiant Peter reeled, turned up his eyes and beheld fifty thousand suns, besides moons and stars, dancing Scotch reels about the firmament—at length, missing his footing, by reason of his wooden leg, down he came, on his seat of honour, with a crash that shook the surrounding hills, and would infallibly have wracked his anatomical system, had he not been received into a cushion softer than velvet, which providence, or Minerva, or St. Nicholas, or some kindly cow, had benevolently prepared for his reception.

The furious Risingh, in despite of that noble maxim, cherished by all true knights, that “fair play is a jewel,” hastened to take advantage of the hero's fall; but just as he was stooping to give the fatal blow, the ever vigilant Peter bestowed him a sturdy thwack over the scone, with his wooden leg,

that set some dozen chimes of bells ringing triple bob-majors in his cerebellum. The bewildered Swede staggered with the blow, and in the mean time the wary Peter, espying a pocket pistol lying hard by (which had dropped from the wallet of his faithful squire and trumpeter Van Corlear during his furious encounter with the drummer) discharged it full at the head of the reeling Risingh—Let not my reader mistake—it was not a murderous weapon loaded with powder and ball, but a little sturdy stone pottle, charged to the muzzle with a double dram of true dutch courage, which the knowing Van Corlear always carried about him by way of replenishing his valour. The hideous missive sung through the air, and true to its course, as was the mighty fragment of a rock, discharged at Hector by bully Ajax, encountered the huge head of the gigantic Swede with matchless violence.

This heaven directed blow decided the eventful battle. The ponderous pericranium of general Jan Risingh sunk upon his breast; his knees tottered under under him; a deathlike torpor seized upon his Titan frame, and he tumbled to the earth with such tremendous violence, that old Pluto started with affright, lest he should have broken through the roof of his infernal palace.

His fall, like that of Goliah, was the signal for defeat and victory--The Swedes gave way--the Dutch pressed forward; the former took to their

heels, the latter hotly pursued—Some entered with them, pell mell, through the sally port—others stormed the bastion, and others scrambled over the curtain. Thus in a little while the impregnable fortress of Fort Christina, which like another Troy had stood a siege of full ten *hours*, was finally carried by assault, without the loss of a single man on either side. Victory in the likeness of a gigantic ox fly, sat perched upon the little cocked hat of the gallant Stuyvesant, and it was universally declared, by all the writers, whom he hired to write the history of his expedition, that on this memorable day he gained a sufficient quantity of glory to immortalize a dozen of the greatest heroes in Christendom !

CHAP. VIII.

In which the author and reader, while reposing after the battle, fall into a very grave and instructive discourse—after which is recorded the conduct of Peter Stuyvesant in respect to his victory.

THANKS to St. Nicholas! I have fairly got through this tremendous battle: let us sit down, my worthy reader, and cool ourselves, for truly I am in a prodigious sweat and agitation—Body o'me, but this fighting of battles is hot work! And if your great commanders, did but know what trouble they give their historians, they would not have the conscience to atchieve so many horrible victories. I already hear my reader complaining, that throughout all this boasted battle, there is not the least slaughter, nor a single individual maimed, if we except the unhappy Swede, who was shorn of his queue by the tranchant blade of Peter Stuyvesant—all which is a manifest outrage on probability, and highly injurious to the interest of the narrative.

For once I candidly confess my captious reader has some grounds for his murmuring—But though I could give a variety of substantial reasons for not having deluded my whole page with blood, and swelled the cadence of every sentence with dying groans, yet I will content myself with barely men-

tioning one; which if it be not sufficient to satisfy every reasonable man on the face of the earth, I will consent that my book shall be cast into the flames—The simple truth then is this, that on consulting every history, manuscript and tradition, which relates to this memorable, though long forgotten battle, I cannot find that a single man was killed, or even wounded, throughout the whole affair!

My readers, if they have any bowels, must easily feel the distressing situation in which I was placed. I had already promised to furnish them with a hideous and unparalleled battle—I had made incredible preparations for the same—and had moreover worked myself up into a most warlike and blood-thirsty state of mind—my honour, as a historian, and my feelings, as a man of spirit, were both too deeply engaged in the business, to back out. Beside, I had transported a great and powerful force of warriors from the Nederlandts, at vast trouble and expense, and I could not reconcile it to my own conscience, or to that reverence which I entertain for them, and their illustrious descendants, to have suffered them to return home, like a renowned British expedition—with a flea in their ears.

How to extract myself from this dilemma was truly perplexing. Had the inexorable fates only allowed me half a dozen dead men, I should have been contented, for I would have made them such

heroes as abounded in the olden time, but whose race is now unfortunately extinct. Men, who, if we may believe those authentic writers, the poets, could drive great armies like sheep before them; and conquer and desolate whole cities by their single arm. I'd have given every mother's son of them as many lives as a cat, and made them die hard, I warrant you.

But seeing that I had not a single carcass at my disposal, all that was left for me, was to make the most I could of my battle, by means of kicks and cuffs, and bruises—black eyes, and bloody noses, and such like ignoble wounds. My greatest difficulty however, was, when I had once put my warriors in a passion, and let them loose into the midst of the enemy; to keep them from doing mischief. Many a time had I to restrain the sturdy Peter, from cleaving a gigantic Swede, to the very waist-band, or spitting half a dozen little fellows on his sword, like so many sparrows—And when I had set some hundreds of missives flying in the air, I did not dare to suffer one of them to reach the ground, lest it should have put an end to some unlucky Dutchman.

The reader cannot conceive how much I suffered from thus in a manner having my hands tied, and how many tempting opportunities I had to wink at, where I might have made as fine a death blow, as any recorded in history or song.

From my own experience, I begin to doubt most potently of the authenticity of many of Dan Homer's stories. I verily believe, that when he had once launched one of his hearty blades among a crowd of the enemy, he cut down many an honest fellow, without any authority for so doing, excepting that he presented a fair mark—and that often a poor devil was sent to grim Pluto's domains, merely because he had a name that would give a sounding turn to a period. But I disclaim all such unprincipled liberties—let me but have truth and the law on my side, and no man would fight harder than myself—but since the various records I consulted did not warrant it, I had too much conscience to kill a single soldier.—By St. Nicholas, but it would have been a pretty piece of business! My enemies the critics, who I foresee will be ready enough to lay any crime they can discover, at my door, might have charged me with murder outright—and I should have esteemed myself lucky to escape, with no harsher verdict than manslaughter!

And now gentle reader that we are tranquilly sitting down here, smoking our pipes, permit me to indulge in a melancholy reflection which at this moment passes across my mind.—How vain, how fleeting, how uncertain are all those gaudy bubbles after which we are panting and toiling in this world of fair delusions. The wealthy store which

the hoary miser has painfully amassed with so many weary days, so many sleepless nights, a spendthrift heir shall squander away in joyless prodigality—The noblest monuments which pride has ever reared to perpetuate a name, the hand of time shall shortly tumble into promiscuous ruins—and even the brightest laurels, gained by hardest feats of arms, may wither and be forever blighted by the chilling neglect of mankind.—“How many illustrious heroes,” says the good Boetius, “who were once the pride and glory of the age, hath the silence of historians buried in eternal oblivion !” And this it was, that made the Spartans when they went to battle, solemnly to sacrifice to the muses, supplicating that their achievements should be worthily recorded. Had not Homer tuned his lofty lyre, observes the elegant Cicero, the valour of Achilles had remained unsung.—And such too, after all the toils and perils he had braved, after all the gallant actions he had achieved, such too had nearly been the fate of the chivalric Peter Stuyvesant, but that I fortunately stepped in and engraved his name on the indelible tablet of history, just as the caitiff Time was silently brushing it away forever !

The more I reflect, the more am I astonished to think, what important beings are we historians ! We are the sovereign censors who decide upon the renown or infamy of our fellow mortals.—We

are the public almoners of fame, dealing out her favours according to our judgment or caprice—we are the benefactors of kings—we are the guardians of truth—we are the scourgers of guilt—we are the instructors of the world—we are—in short, what are we not!—And yet how often does the lofty patrician or lordly Burgomaster stalk contemptuously by the little, plodding, dusty historian like myself, little thinking that this humble mortal is the arbiter of his fate, on whom it shall depend whether he shall live in future ages, or be forgotten in the dirt, as were his ancestors before him. “Insult not the dervise” said a wise caliph to his son, “lest thou offend thine historian;” and many a mighty man of the olden time, had he observed so obvious a maxim, would have escaped divers cruel wipes of the pen, which have been drawn across his character.

But let not my readers think I am indulging in vain glorious boasting, from the consciousness of my own power and importance. On the contrary I shudder to think what direful commotions, what heart rending calamities we historians occasion in the world—I swear to thee, honest reader, as I am a man, I weep at the very idea!—Why, let me ask, are so many illustrious men daily tearing themselves away from the embraces of their distracted families—slighting the smiles of beauty—despising the allurements of fortune, and exposing them-

selves to all the miseries of war?—Why are renowned generals cutting the throats of thousands who never injured them in their lives?—Why are kings desolating empires and depopulating whole countries? in short, what induces all great men, of all ages and countries to commit so many horrible victories and misdeeds, and inflict so many miseries upon mankind and on themselves; but the mere hope that we historians will kindly take them into notice, and admit them into a corner of our volumes. So that the mighty object of all their toils, their hardships and privations is nothing but *immortal fame*—and what is immortal fame?—why, half a page of dirty paper!—alas! alas! how humiliating the idea—that the renown of so great a man as Peter Stuyvesant, should depend upon the pen of so little a man, as Diedrich Knickerbocker!

And now, having refreshed ourselves after the fatigues and perils of the field, it behoves us to return once more to the scene of conflict, and inquire what were the results of this renowned conquest. The Fortress of Christina being the fair metropolis and in a manner the Key to New Sweden, its capture was speedily followed by the entire subjugation of the province. This was not a little promoted by the gallant and courteous deportment of the chivalric Peter. Though a man terrible in battle, yet in the hour of victory was he endued with a spirit generous, merciful and hu-

mane—He vaunted not over his enemies, nor did he make defeat more galling by unmanly insults; for like that mirror of Knightly virtue, the renowned Paladin Orlando, he was more anxious to do great actions, than to talk of them after they were done. He put no man to death; ordered no houses to be burnt down; permitted no ravages to be perpetrated on the property of the vanquished, and even gave one of his bravest staff officers a severe rib-roasting, who was detected in the act of sacking a hen roost.

He moreover issued a proclamation inviting the inhabitants to submit to the authority of their high mightinesses; but declaring, with unexampled clemency, that whoever refused, should be lodged at the public expense, in a goodly castle provided for the purpose, and have an armed retinue to wait on them in the bargain. In consequence of these beneficent terms, about thirty Swedes stepped manfully forward and took the oath of allegiance; in reward for which they were graciously permitted to remain on the banks of the Delaware, where their descendants reside at this very day. But I am told by sundry observant travellers, that they have never been able to get over the chap-fallen looks of their ancestors, and do still unaccountably transmit from father to son, manifest marks of the sound drubbing given them by the sturdy Amsterdammers.

The whole country of New Sweden, having thus yielded to the arms of the triumphant Peter, was reduced to a colony called South River, and placed under the superintendence of a lieutenant governor; subject to the controul of the supreme government at New Amsterdam. This great dignitary, was called Mynheer William Beckman, or rather *Beckman*, who derived his surname, as did Ovidius Naso of yore, from the lordly dimensions of his nose, which projected from the centre of his countenance, like the beak of a parrot. Indeed, it is furthermore insinuated by various ancient records, that this was not only the origin of his name, but likewise the foundation of his fortune, for, as the city was as yet unprovided with a clock, the public made use of Mynheer Beckman's face, as a sundial. Thus did this romantic, and truly picturesque feature, first thrust itself into public notice, dragging its possessor along with it, who in his turn dragged after him the whole Beckman family—These, as the story further adds, were for a long time among the most ancient and honourable families of the province, and gratefully commemorated the origin of their dignity, not as your noble families in England would do, by having a glowing proboscis emblazoned in their escutcheon, but by one and all, wearing a right goodly nose, stuck in the very middle of their faces.

Thus was this perilous enterprize gloriously

terminated, with the loss of only two men; Wolfert Van Horne, a tall spare man, who was knocked overboard by the boom of a sloop, in a flaw of wind: and fat Brom Van Bummel, who was suddenly carried off by a villainous indigestion; both, however, were immortalized, as having bravely fallen, in the service of their country. True it is, Peter Stuyvesant had one of his limbs terribly fractured, being shattered to pieces in the act of storming the fortress; but as it was fortunately his wooden leg, the wound was promptly and effectually healed.

And now nothing remains to this branch of my history, but to mention, that this immaculate hero, and his victorious army, returned joyously to the Manhattoes, marching under the shade of their laurels, as did the followers of young Malcolm, under the moving forest of Dunsinane. Thus did they make a solemn and triumphant entry into New Amsterdam, bearing with them the conquered Risingh, and the remnant of his battered crew, who had refused allegiance. For it appears that the gigantic Swede, had only fallen into a swoon, at the end of the battle, from whence he was speedily restored by a wholesome tweak of the nose.

These captive heroes were lodged, according to the promise of the governor, at the public expense, in a fair and spacious castle; being the prison of state, of which Stoffel Brinkerhoff, the immortal conqueror

of Oyster Bay, was appointed Lord Lieutenant; and which has ever since remained in the possession of his descendants.*

It was a pleasant and goodly sight to witness the joy of the people of New Amsterdam, at beholding their warriors once more returned, from this war in the wilderness. The old women thronged round Antony Van Corlear, who gave the whole history of the campaign with matchless accuracy; saving that he took the credit of fighting the whole battle himself, and especially of vanquishing the stout Risingh, which he considered himself as clearly entitled to, seeing that it was effected by his own stone pottle. The schoolmasters throughout the town gave holliday to their little urchins, who followed in droves after the drums, with paper caps on their heads and sticks in their breeches, thus taking the first lesson in vagabondizing. As to the sturdy rabble they thronged at the heels of Peter Stuyvesant wherever he went, waving their greasy hats in the air, and shouting "Hard-kop-pig Piet forever!"

It was indeed a day of roaring rout and jubilee. A huge dinner was prepared at the Stadt-house in honour of the conquerors, where were assembled in one glorious constellation, the great and the

* This castle though very much altered and modernized is still in being. And stands at the corner of Pearl Street, facing Coentie's slip.

little luminaries of New Amsterdam. There were the lordly Schout and his obsequious deputy—the Burgomasters with their officious Schepens at their elbows—the subaltern officers at the elbows of the Schepens, and so on to the lowest grade of illustrious hangers-on of police; every Tag having his Rag at his side, to finish his pipe, drink off his heel-taps, and laugh at his flights of immortal dullness. In short—for a city feast is a city feast all the world over, and has been a city feast ever since the creation—the dinner went off much the same as do our great corporation junkettings and fourth of July banquets. Loads of fish, flesh and fowl were devoured, oceans of liquor drank, thousands of pipes smoked, and many a dull joke honoured with much obstreperous fat sided laughter.

I must not omit to mention that to this far-famed victory Peter Stuyvesant was indebted for another of his many titles—for so hugely delighted were the honest burghers with his achievements, that they unanimously honoured him with the name of *Pieter de Groodt*, that is to say Peter the Great, or as it was translated by the people of New Amsterdam, *Piet de Pig*—an appellation which he maintained even unto the day of his death.

END OF BOOK VI.

BOOK VII.

Containing the third part of the reign of Peter the Headstrong—his troubles with the British nation, and the decline and fall of the Dutch dynasty.

CHAP. I.

How Peter Stuyvesant relieved the sovereign people from the burthen of taking care of the nation—with sundry particulars of his conduct in time of peace.

THE history of the reign of Peter Stuyvesant, furnishes a melancholy picture of the incessant cares and vexations inseparable from government; and may serve as a solemn warning, to all who are ambitious of attaining the seat of power. Though crowned with victory, enriched by conquest, and returning in triumph to his splendid metropolis, his exultation was checked by beholding the sad abuses that had taken place during the short interval of his absence.

The populace, unfortunately for their own comfort, had taken a deep draught of the intoxicating cup of power, during the reign of William the Tes-

ty ; and though, upon the accession of Peter Stuyvesant they felt, with a certain instinctive perception, which mobs as well as cattle possess, that the reins of government had passed into stronger hands, yet could they not help fretting and chafing and champing upon the bit, in restive silence. No sooner, therefore, was the great Peter's back turned, than the quid nuncs and pot-house politicians of the city immediately broke loose, and indulged in the most ungovernable freaks and gambols.

It seems by some strange and inscrutable fatality, to be the destiny of most countries, and (more especially of your enlightened republics,) always to be governed by the most incompetent man in the nation, so that you will scarcely find an individual throughout the whole community, but who shall detect to you innumerable errors in administration, and shall convince you in the end, that had he been at the head of affairs, matters would have gone on a thousand times more prosperously. Strange ! that government, which seems to be so generally understood should invariably be so erroneously administered—strange, that the talent of legislation so prodigally bestowed, should be denied to the only man in the nation, to whose station it is requisite !

Thus it was in the present instance, not a man of all the herd of pseudo politicians in New Amsterdam, but was an oracle on topics of state, and could have directed public affairs incomparably bet-

ter than Peter Stuyvesant. But so perverse was the old governor in his disposition, that he would never suffer one of the multitude of able counsellors by whom he was surrounded, to intrude his advice and save the country from destruction.

Scarcely therefore had he departed on his expedition against the Swedes, than the old factions of William Kieft's reign began to thrust their heads above water, and to gather together in political meetings, to discuss "the state of the nation." At these assemblages the busy burgomasters and their officious schepens made a very considerable figure. These worthy dignitaries were no longer the fat, well fed, tranquil magistrates that presided in the peaceful days of Wouter Van Twiller—On the contrary, being elected by the people, they formed in a manner, a sturdy bulwark, between the mob and the administration. They were great candidates for popularity, and strenuous advocates for the rights of the rabble; resembling in disinterested zeal the wide mouthed tribunes of ancient Rome, or those virtuous patriots of modern days, emphatically denominated "the friends of the people."

Under the tuition of these profound politicians, it is astonishing how suddenly enlightened the swinish multitude became, in matters above their comprehensions. Cobblers, Tinkers and Taylors all at once felt themselves inspired, like those religious ideots, in the glorious times of monkish illumina-

tion; and without any previous study or experience, became instantly capable of directing all the movements of government. Nor must I neglect to mention a number of superannuated, wrong headed old burghers, who had come over when boys, in the crew of the *Goede Vrouw*, and were held up as infallible oracles by the enlightened mob. To suppose a man who had helped to discover a country, did not know how it ought to be governed was preposterous in the extreme. It would have been deemed as much a heresy, as at the present day to question the political talents, and universal infallibility of our old "heroes of '76"—and to doubt that he who had fought for a government, however stupid he might naturally be, was not competent to fill any station under it.

But as Peter Stuyvesant had a singular inclination to govern his province without the assistance of his subjects, he felt highly incensed on his return to find the factious appearance they had assumed during his absence. His first measure therefore was to restore perfect order, by prostrating the dignity of the sovereign people in the dirt.

He accordingly watched his opportunity, and one evening when the enlightened mob was gathered together in full caucus, listening to a patriotic speech from an inspired cobbler, the intrepid Peter, like his great namesake of all the Russias, all at once appeared among them with a countenance,

sufficient to petrify a mill stone. The whole meeting was thrown in consternation—the orator seemed to have received a paralytic stroke in the very middle of a sublime sentence, he stood aghast with open mouth and trembling knees, while the words horror ! tyranny ! liberty ! rights ! taxes ! death ! destruction ! and a deluge of other patriotic phrases, came roaring from his throat, before he had power to close his lips. The shrewd Peter took no notice of the skulking throng around him, but advancing to the brawling bully-ruffian, and drawing out a huge silver watch, which might have served in times of yore as a town clock, and which is still retained by his decendants as a family curiosity, requested the orator to mend it, and set it going. The orator humbly confessed it was utterly out of his power, as he was unacquainted with the nature of its construction. “Nay, but,” said Peter “try your ingenuity man, you see all the springs and wheels, and how easily the clumsiest hand may stop it and pull it to pieces ; and why should it not be equally easy to regulate as to stop it.” The orator declared that his trade was wholly different, he was a poor cobbler, and had never meddled with a watch in his life. There were men skilled in the art, whose business it was to attend to those matters, but for his part, he should only mar the workmanship, and put the whole in confusion——“Why harkee master of mine,” cried Peter, turning sud-

denly upon him, with a countenance that almost petrified the patcher of shoes into a perfect lap-stone—"dost thou pretend to meddle with the movements of government—to regulate and correct and patch and cobble a complicated machine, the principles of which are above thy comprehension, and its simplest operations too subtle for thy understanding; when thou canst not correct a trifling error in a common piece of mechanism, the whole mystery of which is open to thy inspection?—Hence with thee to the leather and stone, which are emblems of thy head; cobble thy shoes and confine thyself to the vocation for which heaven has fitted thee—But," elevating his voice until it made the welkin ring, "if ever I catch thee, or any of thy tribe, whether square-head, or platter breech, meddling with affairs of government; by St. Nicholas but I'll have every mother's bastard of ye flea'd alive, and your hides stretched for drum heads, that ye may henceforth make a noise to some purpose!"

This threat and the tremendous voice in which it was uttered, caused the whole multitude to quake with fear. The hair of the orator rose on his head like his own swine's bristles, and not a knight of the thimble present, but his mighty heart died within him, and he felt as though he could have verily escaped through the eye of a needle.

But though this measure produced the desired effect, in reducing the community to order, yet it tended to injure the popularity of the great Peter, among the enlightened vulgar. Many accused him of entertaining highly aristocratic sentiments, and of leaning too much in favour of the patricians. Indeed there was some appearance of ground for such a suspicion, for in his time did first arise that pride of family and ostentation of wealth, that has since grown to such a height in this city.* Those who drove their own waggons, kept their own cows, and possessed the fee simple of a cabbage garden, looked down, with the most gracious, though mortifying condescension, on their less wealthy neighbours; while those whose parents had been cabin passengers in the *Goede Vrouw*, were continually railing out, about the dignity of ancestry—Luxury began to make its appearance under divers forms, and even Peter Stuyvesant himself (though in truth his station required a little state and dignity) appeared with great pomp of equipage on public occasions, and always rode to church in a yellow waggon with flaming red wheels!

In a work published many years after the time of which Mr. Knickerbocker treats (in 1701. By C. W. A. M.) it is mentioned "Frederick Philips was counted the richest Mynheer in New York, and was said to have *whole hogsheads of Indian money or wampum*; and had a son and daughter, who according to the Dutch custom should divide it equally."

EDITOR.

From this picture my readers will perceive, how very faithfully many of the peculiarities of our ancestors have been retained by their descendants. The pride of purse still prevails among our wealthy citizens. And many a laborious tradesman, after plodding in dust and obscurity in the morning of his life, sits down out of breath in his latter days to enact the gentleman, and enjoy the dignity honestly earned by the sweat of his brow. In this he resembles a notable, but ambitious housewife, who after drudging and stewing all day in the kitchen to prepare an entertainment; flounces into the parlour of an evening, and swelters in all the magnificence of a maudlin fine lady.

It is astonishing, moreover, to behold how many great families have sprung up of late years, who pride themselves excessively on the score of ancestry. Thus he who can look up to his father without humiliation assumes not a little importance—he who can safely talk of his grandfather, is still more vain-glorious, but he who can look back to his great grandfather, without stumbling over a cobbler's stall, or running his head against a whipping post, is absolutely intolerable in his pretensions to family—bless us! what a piece of work is here, between these mushrooms of an hour, and these mushrooms of a day!

For my part I look upon our old dutch families as the only local nobility, and the real lords of the

soil—nor can I ever see an honest old burgher quietly smoking his pipe, but I look upon him with reverence as a dignified descendant from the Van Rensselaers, the Van Zandts, the Knickerbockers, and the Van Tuyls.

But from what I have recounted in the former part of this chapter, I would not have my reader imagine, that the great Peter was a tyrannical governor, ruling his subjects with a rod of iron—on the contrary, where the dignity of authority was not implicated, he abounded with generosity and courteous condescension. In fact he really believed, though I fear my more enlightened republican readers will consider it a proof of his ignorance and illiberality, that in preventing the cup of social life from being dashed with the intoxicating ingredient of politics, he promoted the tranquility and happiness of the people—and by detaching their minds from subjects which they could not understand, and which only tended to inflame their passions, he enabled them to attend more faithfully and industriously to their proper callings; becoming more useful citizens and more attentive to their families and fortunes.

So far from having any unreasonable austerity, he delighted to see the poor and the labouring man rejoice, and for this purpose was a great promoter of holidays and public amusements. Under his reign was first introduced the custom of crack-

ing eggs at Paas or Easter. New year's day was also observed with extravagant festivity—and ushered in by the ringing of bells and firing of guns. Every house was a temple to the jolly god—Oceans of cherry brandy, true Hollands and mull-ed cyder were set afloat on the occasion; and not a poor man in town, but made it a point to get drunk, out of a principle of pure economy—taking in liquor enough to serve him for half a year afterwards.

It would have done one's heart good also to have seen the valiant Peter, seated among the old burghers and their wives of a saturday afternoon, under the great trees that spread their shade over the Battery, watching the young men and women, as they danced on the green. Here he would smoke his pipe, crack his joke, and forget the rugged toils of war, in the sweet oblivious festivities of peace. He would occasionally give a nod of approbation to those of the young men who shuffled and kicked most vigorously, and now and then give a hearty smack, in all honesty of soul, to the buxom lass that held out longest, and tired down all her competitors—infallible proofs of her being the best dancer. Once it is true the harmony of the meeting was rather interrupted. A young vrouw, of great figure in the gay world, and who, having lately come from Holland, of course led the fashions in the city, made her appearance in not

more than half a dozen petticoats, and these too of most alarming shortness.—An universal whisper ran through the assembly, the old ladies all felt shocked in the extreme, the young ladies blushed, and felt excessively for the “poor thing,” and even the governor himself was observed to be a little troubled in mind. To complete the astonishment of the good folks, she undertook in the course of a jig, to describe some astonishing figures in algebra, which she had learned from a dancing master at Rotterdam.—Whether she was too animated in flourishing her feet, or whether some vagabond Zephyr took the liberty of obtruding his services, certain it is that in the course of a grand evolution, that would not have disgraced a modern ball room, she made a most unexpected display—Whereat the whole assembly were thrown into great admiration, several grave country members were not a little moved, and the good Peter himself, who was a man of unparalleled modesty, felt himself grievously scandalized.

The shortness of the female dresses, which had continued in fashion, ever since the days of William Kieft, had long offended his eye, and though extremely averse to meddling with the petticoats of the ladies, yet he immediately recommended, that every one should be furnished with a flounce to the bottom. He likewise ordered that the ladies, and indeed the gentlemen, should use no other step in

dancing, than shuffle and turn, and double trouble ; and forbade, under pain of his high displeasure, any young lady thenceforth to attempt what was termed “ exhibiting the graces.”

These were the only restrictions he ever imposed upon the sex, and these were considered by them, as tyrannical oppressions, and resisted with that becoming spirit, always manifested by the gentle sex, whenever their privileges are invaded—In fact, Peter Stuyvesant plainly perceived, that if he attempted to push the matter any further, there was danger of their leaving off petticoats altogether ; so like a wise man, experienced in the ways of women, he held his peace, and suffered them ever after to wear their petticoats and cut their capers, as high as they pleased.

CHAP. II.

How Peter Stuyvesant was much molested by the moss troopers of the East, and the Giants of Merryland—and how a dark and horrid conspiracy was carried on in the British Cabinet, against the prosperity of the Manhattoes.

WE are now approaching towards what may be termed the very pith and marrow of our work, and if I am not mistaken in my forebodings, we shall have a world of business to dispatch, in the ensuing chapters. Thus far have I come on prosperously, and even beyond my expectations; for to let the reader into a secret (and truly we have become so extremely intimate, that I believe I shall tell him all my secrets before we part) when I first set out upon this marvellous, but faithful little history, I felt horribly perplexed to think how I should ever get through with it—and though I put a bold face on the matter, and vapoured exceedingly, yet was it naught but the blustering of a braggadocio at the commencement of a quarrel, which he feels sure he shall have to sneak out of in the end.

When I reflected, that this illustrious province, though of prodigious importance in the eyes of its inhabitants and its historian, had in sober sadness, but little wealth or other spoils to reward the trou-

ble of assailing it, and that it had little to expect from running wantonly into war, save a sound drubbing—When I pondered all these things in my mind, I began utterly to despair, that I should find either battles, or bloodshed, or any other of those calamities, which give importance to a nation, to enliven my history withal.—I regarded this most amiable of provinces, in the light of an unhappy maiden, to whom Heaven had not granted sufficient charms, to excite the diabolical attempts of wicked man; who had no cruel father to persecute and oppress her, no abominable ravisher to run away with her, and who had not strength nor courage enough, of her own accord, to act the heroine, and go in “quest of adventures”—in short, who was doomed to vegetate, in a tranquil, unmolested, hopeless, howling state of virginity, and finally to die in peace, without bequeathing a single misery, or outrage, to those warehouses of sentimental woe, the circulating libraries.

But thanks to my better stars, they have decreed otherwise. It is with some communities, as it is with certain meddlesome individuals, they have a wonderful facility at getting into scrapes, and I have always remarked, that those are most liable to get in, who have the least talent at getting out again. This is doubtless occasioned by the excessive *valour* of those little states; for I have likewise noticed, that this rampant and ungovernable virtue, is always

most unruly where most confined; which accounts for its raging and vapouring so amazingly in little states, little men, and ugly little women more especially. Thus this little province of Nieuw Nederlandts has already drawn upon itself a host of enemies; has had as many hard knocks, as would gratify the ambition of the most warlike nation; and is in sober sadness, a very forlorn, distressed, and woe begone little province!—all which was no doubt kindly ordered by providence, to give interest and sublimity, to this most pathetic of histories.

But I forbear to enter into a detail of the pitiful maraudings and harrassments, that for a long while after the victory on the Delaware, continued to insult the dignity and disturb the repose of the Nederlanders. Never shall the pen which has been gloriously wielded in the tremendous battle of Fort Christina, be drawn in scurvy border broils and frontier skirmishings—nor the historian who put to flight stout Risingh and his host, and conquered all New Sweden, be doomed to battle it in defence of a pig sty or a hen roost, and wage ignoble strife with squatters and moss troopers! Forbid it all ye muses, that a Knickerbocker should ever so far forget what is due to his family and himself!

Suffice it then in brevity to say, that the implacable hostility of the people of the east, which had

so miraculously been prevented from breaking out, as my readers must remember, by the sudden prevalence of witchcraft, and the dissensions in the council of Amphyctions, now again displayed itself in a thousand grievous and bitter scourings upon the borders.

Scarcely a month passed but what the little dutch settlements on the frontiers were alarmed by the sudden appearance of an invading army from Connecticut. This would advance resolutely through the country, like a puissant caravan of the deserts, the women and children mounted in carts loaded with pots and kettles, as though they meant to boil the honest dutchmen alive, and devour them like so many lobsters. At the tail of these carts would stalk a crew of long limbed, lank sided varlets, with axes on their shoulders and packs on their backs, resolutely bent upon *improving* the country in despite of its proprietors. These settling themselves down, would in a little while completely dislodge the unfortunate Nederlanders; elbowing them out of those rich little bottoms and fertile valleys, in which your dutch yeomanry are so famous for nestling themselves—For it is notorious that wherever these shrewd men of the east get a footing, the honest dutchmen do gradually disappear, retiring slowly like the Indians before the whites; being totally discomfited by the talking, chaffering, swapping, bargaining disposition of their new neighbours.

All these audacious infringements on the territories of their high mightinesses were accompanied, as has before been hinted, by a world of rascally brawls, ribroastings and bundlings, which would doubtlessly have incensed the valiant Peter to wreak immediate chastisement, had he not at the very same time been perplexed by distressing accounts, from Mynheer Beckman, who commanded the territories at South river.

The rebellious Swedes who had so graciously been suffered to remain about the Delaware, already began to shew signs of mutiny and disaffection. But what was worse, a peremptory claim was laid to the whole territory, as the rightful property of lord Baltimore, by Fendal, a chieftain who ruled over the colony of Maryland, or Merry-land as it was anciently called, because that the inhabitants not having the fear of the Lord before their eyes, were notoriously prone to get fuddled and make *merry* with mint julep and apple toddy. Nay, so hostile was this bully Fendal, that he threatened, unless his claim was instantly complied with, to march incontinently at the head of a potent force of the roaring boys of Merryland, together with a great and mighty train of giants who infested the banks of the Susquehanna*—and to lay waste and depopulate the whole country of South river.

* We find very curious and wonderful accounts of these strange people (who were doubtless the ancestors of the present Maryland-

By this it is manifest that this boasted colony, like all great acquisitions of territory, soon became a greater evil to the conqueror, than the loss of it was to the conquered ; and caused greater uneasiness and trouble, than all the territory of the New Netherlands besides. Thus providence wisely orders, that one evil shall balance another. The conqueror who wrests the property of his neighbour, who wrongs a nation and desolates a country, though he may acquire increase of empire, and immortal fame, yet ensures his own inevitable punishment. He takes to himself a cause of endless anxiety—he incorporates with his late sound domain, a loose part—a rotten disaffected member ; which is an exhaustless source of internal treason and disunion, and external altercation and hostility—Happy is that nation, which compact, united, loyal in all its parts, and concentrated in its strength, seeks no idle acquisition of unprofitable and ungovernable

ers) made by master Hariot, in his interesting history. “The Susquesahanocks”—observes he, “are a giantly people, strange in proportion, behaviour and attire—their voice sounding from them as if out a cave. Their tobacco pipes were three quarters of a yard long, carved at the great end with a bird, beare, or other device, sufficient to beat out the braines of a horse, (and how many asses braines are beaten out, or rather men’s braines smoaked out and asses brains haled in, by our lesser pipes at home.) The calfe of one of their legges was measured three quarters of a yard about, the rest of his limbs proportionable.

Master Hariot’s Journ. Purch. Pil.

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territory—which, content to be prosperous and happy, has no ambition to be great. It is like a man well organized in all his system, sound in health, and full of vigour; unincumbered by useless trappings, and fixed in an unshaken attitude. But the nation, insatiable of territory, whose domains are scattered, feebly united, and weakly organized, is like a senseless miser sprawling among golden stores, open to every attack, and unable to defend the riches he vainly endeavours to overshadow.

At the time of receiving the alarming dispatches from South river, the great Peter was busily employed in quelling certain Indian troubles that had broken out about Esopus, and was moreover meditating how to relieve his eastern borders, on the Connecticut. He however sent word so Mynheer Beckman to be of good heart, to maintain incessant vigilance, and to let him know if matters wore a more threatening appearance; in which case he would incontinently repair with his warriors of the Hudson, to spoil the merriment of these Merrylanders; for he coveted exceedingly to have a bout, hand to hand, with some half a score of these giants—having never encountered a giant in his whole life, unless we may so call the stout Risingh, and he was but a little one.

Nothing however appeared further to molest the tranquillity of Mynheer Beckman and his

colony. Fendal and his Myrmidons remained at home, carousing it soundly upon hoe cakes, bacon, and mint julep, and running horses, and fighting cocks, for which they were greatly renowned. At hearing of this Peter Stuyvesant was highly rejoiced, for notwithstanding his inclination to measure weapons with these monstrous men of the Susquehanna, yet he had already as much employment nearer home, as he could turn his hands to. Little did he think, worthy soul, that this southern calm, was but the deceitful prelude to a most terrible and fatal storm, then brewing, which was soon to burst forth and overwhelm the unsuspecting city of New Amsterdam !

Now so it was, that while this excellent governor was, like a second Cato, giving his little senate laws, and not only giving them, but enforcing them too—while he was incessantly travelling the rounds of his beloved province—posting from place to place to redress grievances, and while busy at one corner of his dominions all the rest getting into an uproar—At this very time, I say, a dark and direful plot was hatching against him, in that nursery of monstrous projects, the British Cabinet. The news of his achievements on the Delaware, according to a sage old historian of New Amsterdam, had occasioned not a little talk and marvel in the courts of Europe. And the same profound writer assures us that the cabinet of England began to

HISTORY OF

entertain great jealousy and uneasiness at the encreasing power of the Manhattoes, and the valour of its sturdy yeomanry.

Agents we are told, were at work from the Amphyctionic council of the East, earnestly urging the cabinet to assist them in subjugating this fierce and terrible little province, and that sagacious cabinet, which ever likes to be dabbling in dirty water, had already began to lend an ear to their importunities. Just at this time Lord Baltimore, whose bullying agent, as has before been mentioned, had so alarmed Mynheer Beckman, laid his claim before the cabinet to the lands of South river, which he complained were unjustly and forcibly detained from him, by these daring usurpers of the New Nederlandts.

At this it is said his majesty Charles II, who though Defender of the Faith, was an arrant, lounging, rake-helly roystering wag of a Prince, settled the whole matter by a dash of the pen, by which he made a present of a large tract of North America, including the province of New Netherlands, to his brother the duke of York—a donation truly loyal, since none but great monarchs have a right to give away, what does not belong to them.

That this munificent gift might not be merely nominal, his majesty on the 12th of March 1664, ordered that a gallant armament should be forthwith prepared, to invade the city of New Amster-

dam by land and water, and put his brother in complete possession of the premises.

Thus critically are situated the affairs of the New Netherlanders. The honest burghers, so far from thinking of the jeopardy in which their interests are placed, are soberly smoking their pipes and thinking of nothing at all—the privy councillors of the province, are at this moment snoring in full quorum, like the drones of five hundred bagpipes, while the active Peter, who takes all the labour of thinking and acting upon himself, is busily devising some method of bringing the grand council of Amphyctions to terms. In the mean while an angry cloud is darkly scowling on the horizon—soon shall it rattle about the ears of these dozing Netherlanders and put the mettle of their stout hearted governor completely to the trial.

But come what may, I here pledge my veracity, that in all warlike conflicts and subtle perplexities, he shall still acquit himself with the gallant bearing and spotless honour of a noble minded obstinate old cavalier—Forward then to the charge!—shine out propitious stars on the renowned city of the Manhattoes; and may the blessing of St. Nicholas go with thee—honest Peter Stuyvesant!

CHAP. III.

Of Peter Stuyvesant's expedition into the east Country, shewing that though an old bird, he did not understand trap.

Great nations resemble great men in this particular, that their greatness is seldom known, until they get in trouble ; adversity has therefore, been wisely denominated the ordeal of true greatness, which like gold, can never receive its real estimation until it has passed through the furnace. In proportion therefore as a nation, a community or an individual (possessing the inherent quality of greatness) is involved in perils and misfortunes, in proportion does it rise in grandeur—and even when sinking under calamity, like a house on fire, makes a more glorious display, than ever it did, in the fairest period of its prosperity.

The vast empire of China, though teeming with population and imbibing and concentrating the wealth of nations, has vegetated through a succession of drowsy ages ; and were it not for its internal revolution, and the subversion of its ancient government by the Tartars, might have presented nothing but an uninteresting detail of dull, monotonous prosperity. Pompeia and Herculaneum might have passed into oblivion, with a herd of

their contemporaries, had they not been fortunately overwhelmed by a volcano. The renowned city of Troy has acquired celebrity only from its ten years distress, and final conflagration—Paris rises in importance, by the plots and massacres, which have ended in the exaltation of the illustrious Napoleon—and even the mighty London itself, has skulked through the records of time, celebrated for nothing of moment, excepting the Plague, the great fire and Guy Faux's gunpowder plot! Thus cities and empires seem to creep along, enlarging in silent obscurity under the pen of the historian, until at length they burst forth in some tremendous calamity—and snatch as it were, immortality from the explosion!

The above principle being plainly advanced, strikingly illustrated, and readily admitted, my reader will need but little discernment to perceive, that the city of New Amsterdam and its dependent province, are on the high road to greatness. Dangers and hostilities threaten them from every side, and it is really a matter of astonishment to me, how so small a state, has been able in so short a time, to entangle itself in so many difficulties. Ever since the province was first taken by the nose, at the fort of Good Hope, in the tranquil days of Wouter Van Twiller, has it been gradually encreasing in historic importance; and never could it have had a more appropriate chieftain to

conduct it to the pinnacle of grandeur, than Peter Stuyvesant.

He was an iron headed old veteran, in whose fiery heart sat enthroned all those five kinds of courage described by Aristotle, and had the philosopher mentioned five hundred more to the back of them, I verily believe, he would have been found master of them all—The only misfortune was, that he was deficient in the better part of valour called discretion, a cold blooded virtue which could not exist in the tropical climate of his mighty soul. Hence it was he was continually hurrying into those unheard of enterprises that gave an air of chivalric romance to all his history, and hence it was that he now conceived a project, the very thought of which makes me to tremble while I write.

This was no other than to repair in person to the mighty council of the Amphyctions, bearing the sword in one hand and the olive branch in the other—to require immediate reparation for the innumerable violations of that treaty which in an evil hour he had formed—to put a stop to those repeated maraudings on the eastern borders—or else to throw his gauntlet and appeal to arms for satisfaction.

On declaring this resolution in his privy council, the venerable members were seized with vast astonishment, for once in their lives they ventured to

remonstrate, setting forth the rashness of exposing his sacred person, in the midst of a strange and barbarous people, with sundry other weighty remonstrances—all which had about as much influence upon the determination of the headstrong Peter, as though you were to endeavour to turn a rusty weather cock, with a broken winded bellows.

Summoning therefore to his presence, his trusty follower Antony Van Corlear, he commanded him to hold himself in readiness to accompany him the following morning, on this his hazardous enterprise. Now Antony the trumpeter was a little stricken in years, yet by dint of keeping up a good heart, and having never known care or sorrow (having never been married) he was still a hearty, jocund rubicund, gamesome wag, and of great capacity in the doublet. This last was ascribed to his living a jolly life on those domains at the Hook, which Peter Stuyvesant had granted to him, for his gallantry at Fort Casimer.

Be this as it may, there was nothing that more delighted Antony, than this command of the great Peter, for he could have followed the stout hearted old governor to the world's end, with love and loyalty—and he moreover still remembered the frolicking and dancing and bundling, and other disports of the east country, and entertained dainty recollection of numerous kind and buxom lasses, whom he longed exceedingly again to encounter.

Thus then did this mirror of hardihood set forth, with no other attendant but his trumpeter, upon one of the most perilous enterprises ever recorded in the annals of Knight errantry.—For a single warrior to venture openly among a whole nation of foes ; but above all, for a plain downright dutchman to think of negotiating with the whole council of New England—never was there known a more desperate undertaking !—Ever since I have entered upon the chronicles of this peerless but hitherto uncelebrated chieftain, has he kept me in a state of incessant action and anxiety with the toils and dangers he is constantly encountering—Oh ! for a chapter of the tranquil reign of Wouter Van Twiller, that I might repose on it as on a feather bed !

Is it not enough Peter Stuyvesant, that I have once already rescued thee from the machinations of these terrible Amphyctions, by bringing the whole powers of witchcraft to thine aid ?—Is it not enough, that I have followed thee undaunted, like a guardian spirit, into the midst of the horrid battle of Fort Christina ?—That I have been put incessantly to my trumps to keep thee safe and sound—now warding off with my single pen the shower of dastard blows that fell upon thy rear—now narrowly shielding thee from a deadly thrust, by a mere tobacco box—now casing thy dauntless scull with adamant, when even thy stubborn ram beaver failed

to resist the sword of the stout Risingh—and now, not merely bringing thee off alive, but triumphant, from the clutches of the gigantic Swede, by the desperate means of a paltry stone pottle?—Is not all this enough, but must thou still be plunging into new difficulties and jeopardizing in headlong enterprises, thyself, thy trumpeter, and thy historian!

But all this is empty talk. What influence can I expect to have, when even his councillors, who never before attempted to advise him in their lives, have spoken to no effect. All that remains is quietly to take up my pen, as did Antony his trumpet, and faithfully follow at his heels—and I swear that, like the latter, so truly do I love the hairbrained valour of this fierce old Cavalier, that I feel as if I could follow him through the world, even though (which Heaven forefend) he should lead me through another volume of adventures.

And now the ruddy faced Aurora, like a buxom chamber-maid, draws aside the sable curtains of the night, and out bounces from his bed the jolly red haired Phœbus, startled at being caught so late in the embraces of Dame Thetis. With many a stable oath, he harnesses his brazen footed steeds, and whips and lashes, and splashes up the firmament, like a loitering post boy, half an hour behind his time. And now behold that imp of fame and prowess the headstrong Peter, bestriding a raw boned, switch tailed charger, gallantly arrayed in

full regimentals, and bracing on his thigh that trusty brass hilted sword, which had wrought such fearful deeds on the banks of the Delaware.

Behold hard after him his doughty trumpeter Van Corlear, mounted on a broken winded, wall eyed, calico mare; his sturdy stone pottle which had laid low the mighty Risingh, slung under his arm, and his trumpet displayed vauntingly in his right hand, decorated with a gorgeous banner, on which is emblazoned the great beaver of the Manhattoes. See them proudly issuing out of the city gate, like an iron clad hero of yore, with his faithful squire at his heels, the populace following them with their eyes, and shouting many a parting wish, and hearty cheering.—Farewel, Hard-koppig-Piet! Farewel honest Antony!—Pleasant be your way-faring—prosperous your return! The stoutest hero that ever drew a sword, and the worthiest trumpeter that ever trod shoe leather!

Legends are lamentably silent about the events that befel our adventurers, in this their adventurous travel, excepting the Stuyvesant Manuscript, which gives the substance of a pleasant little heroic poem, written on the occasion by Domine Ægidius Luyck,* who appears to have been the poet-laureat of New

* This Luyck, was moreover, rector of the Latin school in Nieuw Nederlandt, 1663. There are two pieces of verses to Ægidius Luyck in D. Selyn's MSS. of poesies, upon his marriage with Judith Van Isendoorn. Old MS.

Amsterdam. This inestimable manuscript assures us, that it was a rare spectacle to behold the great Peter and his loyal follower, hailing the morning sun, and rejoicing in the clear countenance of nature, as they pranced it through the pastoral scenes of Bloemen Dael;† which in those days was a sweet and rural valley, beautified with many a bright wild flower, refreshed by many a pure streamlet, and enlivened here and there by a delectable little dutch cottage, sheltered under some gently swelling hill, and almost buried in embowering trees.

Now did they enter upon the confines of Connecticut, where they encountered many grievous difficulties and perils. At one place they were assailed by some half a score of country squires and militia colonels, who, mounted on goodly steeds, hung upon their rear for several miles, harassing them exceedingly with guesses and questions, more especially the worthy Peter, whose silver chas'd leg excited not a little marvel. At another place hard by the renowned town of Stamford, they were set upon by a great and mighty legion of church deacons, who imperiously demanded of them five shillings, for travelling on Sunday, and threatened to carry them captive to a neighbouring church whose steeple peer'd above the trees ; but these the valiant

† Now called Blooming Dale, about four miles from New York.

Peter put to rout with little difficulty, insomuch that they bestrode their canes and gallopped off in horrible confusion, leaving their cocked hats behind in the hurry of their flight. But not so easily did he escape from the hands of a crafty man of Py-quag; who with undaunted perseverance, and repeated onsets, fairly bargained him out of his goodly switch-tailed charger, leaving in place thereof a villainous, spavined, foundered Narraganset pacer.

But maugre all these hardships, they pursued their journey cheerily, along the course of the soft flowing Connecticut, whose gentle waves, says the song, roll through many a fertile vale, and sunny plain; now reflecting the lofty spires of the bustling city, and now the rural beauties of the humble hamlet; now echoing with the busy hum of commerce, and now with the cheerful song of the peasant.

At every town would Peter Stuyvesant, who was noted for warlike punctilio, order the sturdy Antony to sound a courteous salutation; though the manuscript observes, that the inhabitants were thrown into great dismay, when they heard of his approach. For the fame of his incomparable achievements on the Delaware, had spread throughout the East country, and they dreaded lest he had come to take vengeance on their manifold transgressions.

But the good Peter rode through these towns with a smiling aspect; waving his hand with inexpressible majesty and condescension; for he verily believed that the old clothes which these ingenious people had thrust into their broken windows, and the festoons of dried apples and peaches which ornamented the fronts of their houses, were so many decorations in honour of his approach; as it was the custom in days of chivalry, to compliment renowned heroes, by sumptuous displays of tapestry and gorgeous furniture. The women crowded to the doors to gaze upon him as he passed, so much does prowess in arms, delight the gentle sex. The little children too ran after him in troops, staring with wonder at his regimentals, his brimstone breeches, and the silver garniture of his wooden leg. Nor must I omit to mention the joy which many strapping wenches betrayed, at beholding the jovial Van Corlear, who had whilome delighted them so much with his trumpet, when he bore the great Peter's challenge to the Amphyctions. The kind-hearted Antony alighted from his calico mare, and kissed them all with infinite loving kindness—and was right pleased to see a crew of little trumpeters crowding around him for his blessing; each of whom he patted on the head, bade him be a good boy, and gave him a penny to buy molasses candy.

The Stuyvesant manuscript makes but little further mention of the governor's adventures upon

this expedition, excepting that he was received with extravagant courtesy and respect by the great council of the Amphyctions, who almost talked him to death with complimentary and congratulatory harangues. Of his negotiations with the grand council I shall say nothing, as there are more important matters which call for the attention of myself, my readers, and Peter Stuyvesant. Suffice it to mention, it was like all other negotiations—a great deal was said, and very little done: one conversation led to another—one conference begat misunderstandings which it took a dozen conferences to explain; at the end of which the parties found themselves just where they were at first; excepting that they had entangled themselves in a host of questions of etiquette, and conceived a cordial distrust of each other that rendered their future negotiations ten times more difficult than ever.*

In the midst of all these perplexities, which bewildered the brain and incensed the ire of the sturdy Peter, who was of all men in the world, perhaps, the least fitted for diplomatic wiles, he privately received the first intimation of the dark conspiracy which had been matured in the Cabinet of England. To this was added the astounding in-

* For certain of the particulars of this ancient negotiation see Haz. Col. State Pap. It is singular that Smith is entirely silent with respect to the memorable expedition of Peter Stuyvesant above treated of by Mr. Knickerbocker. EDITOR.

telligence that a hostile squadron had already sailed from England, destined to reduce the province of New Netherlands, and that the grand council of Amphyctions had engaged to co-operate, by sending a great army to invade New Amsterdam by land.

Unfortunate Peter! did I not enter with sad forebodings upon this ill starred expedition! did I not tremble when I saw thee, with no other councillor but thine own head, with no other armour but an honest tongue, a spotless conscience and a rusty sword! with no other protector but St. Nicholas—and no other attendant but a brokenwinded trumpeter—Did I not tremble when I beheld thee thus sally forth, to contend with all the knowing powers of New England.

Oh how did the sturdy old warrior rage and roar, when he found himself thus entrapped, like a lion in the hunter's toil. Now did he determine to draw his trusty sword, and manfully to fight his way through all the countries of the east. Now did he resolve to break in upon the council of the Amphyctions and put every mother's son of them to death.—At length, as his direful wrath subsided, he resorted to safer though less glorious expedients.

Concealing from the council his knowledge of their machinations, he privately dispatched a trusty messenger, with missives to his councillors at New

Amsterdam, apprizing them of the impending danger, commanding them immediately to put the city in a posture of defence, while in the mean time he endeavoured to elude his enemies and come to their assistance. This done he felt himself marvellously relieved, rose slowly, shook himself like a rhinoceros, and issued forth from his den, in much the same manner as giant Despair is described to have issued from Doubting castle, in the chivalric history of the Pilgrim's Progress.

And now much does it grieve me that I must leave the gallant Peter in this perilous jeopardy : but it behoves us to hurry back and see what is going on at New Amsterdam, for greatly do I fear that city is already in a turmoil. Such was ever the fate of Peter Stuyvesant, while doing one thing with heart and soul, he was too apt to leave every thing else at sixes and sevens. While, like a potentate of yore, he was absent attending to those things in person, which in modern days are trusted to generals and ambassadors, his little territory at home was sure to get in an uproar—All which was owing to that uncommon strength of intellect, which induced him to trust to nobody but himself, and which had acquired him the renowned appellation of Peter the Headstrong.

CHAP. IV.

How the people of New Amsterdam, were thrown into a great panic, by the news of a threatened invasion, and how they fortified themselves very strongly—with resolutions.

THERE is no sight more truly interesting to a philosopher, than to contemplate a community, where every individual has a voice in public affairs, where every individual thinks himself the atlas of the nation, and where every individual thinks it his duty to bestir himself for the good of his country—I say, there is nothing more interesting to a philosopher, than to see such a community in a sudden bustle of war. Such a clamour of tongues—such a bawling of patriotism—such running hither and thither—every body in a hurry—every body up to the ears in trouble—every body in the way, and every body interrupting his industrious neighbour—who is busily employed in doing nothing! It is like witnessing a great fire, where every man is at work like a hero—some dragging about empty engines—others scampering with full buckets, and spilling the contents into the boots of their neighbours—and others ringing the church bells all night, by way of putting out the fire. Little firemen—like sturdy little knights storming a breach, clambering up and

down scaling ladders, and bawling through tin trumpets, by way of directing the attack.—Here one busy fellow, in his great zeal to save the property of the unfortunate, catches up an anonymous chamber utensil, and gallants it off with an air of as much self-importance, as if he had rescued a pot of money—another throws looking glasses and china, out of the window, by way of saving them from the flames, while those who can do nothing else, to assist in the great calamity run up and down the streets with open throats, keeping up an incessant cry of *Fire! Fire! Fire!*

“ When the news arrived at Corinth,” says the grave and profound Lucian—though I own the story is rather trite, “ that Philip was about to attack them, the inhabitants were thrown into violent alarm. Some ran to furbish up their arms; others rolled stones to build up the walls—every body in short, was employed, and every body was in the way of his neighbour. Diogenes alone, was the only man who could find nothing to do—whereupon determining not to be idle when the welfare of his country was at stake, he tucked up his robe, and fell to rolling his tub with might and main, up and down the Gymnasium.” In like manner did every mother’s son, in the patriotic community of New Amsterdam, on receiving the missives of Peter Stuyvesant, busy himself most mightily in putting things in confusion, and assisting the general uproar.

"Every man"—saith the Stuyvesant Manuscript—"flew to arms!"—by which is meant, that not one of our honest dutch citizens would venture to church or to market, without an old fashioned spit of a sword, dangling at his side, and a long dutch fowling piece on his shoulder—nor would he go out of a night without a lanthorn; nor turn a corner, without first peeping cautiously round, lest he should come unawares upon a British army—And we are informed, that Stoffel Brinkerhoff, who was considered by the old women, almost as brave a man as the governor himself—actually had two one pound swivels mounted in his entry, one pointing out at the front door, and the other at the back.

But the most strenuous measure resorted to on this awful occasion, and one which has since been found of wonderful efficacy, was to assemble popular meetings. These brawling convocations, I have already shewn, were extremely obnoxious to Peter Stuyvesant, but as this was a moment of unusual agitation, and as the old governor was not present to repress them, they broke out with intolerable violence. Hither therefore, the orators and politicians repaired, and there seemed to be a competition among them, who should bawl the loudest, and exceed the other in hyperbolical bursts of patriotism, and in resolutions to uphold and defend the government. In these sage and all powerful meetings it

was determined *nem. con.* that they were the most enlightened, the most dignified, the most formidable and the most ancient community upon the face of the earth—and finding that this resolution was so universally and readily carried, another was immediately proposed—whether it was not possible and politic to exterminate Great Britain? upon which sixty nine members spoke most eloquently in the affirmative, and only one arose to suggest some doubts—who as a punishment for his treasonable presumption, was immediately seized by the mob and tarred and feathered—which punishment being equivalent to the Tarpeian Rock, he was afterwards considered as an outcast from society and his opinion went for nothing—The question therefore, being unanimously carried in the affirmative, it was recommended to the grand council to pass it into a law; which was accordingly done—By this measure the hearts of the people at large were wonderfully encouraged, and they waxed exceedingly choleric and valourous—Indeed the first paroxysm of alarm having in some measure subsided; the old women having buried all the money they could lay their hands on; and their husbands daily getting fuddled with what was left—the community began even to stand on the offensive. Songs were manufactured in low dutch and sung about the streets, wherein the English were most woefully beaten, and shewn no quarter, and popular addresses

were made, wherein it was proved to a certainty, that the fate of old England depended upon the will of the New Amsterdammers.

Finally, to strike a violent blow at the very vitals of Great Britain, a grand caucus of the wiser inhabitants assembled; and having purchased all the British manufactures they could find, they made thereof a huge bonfire—and in the patriotic glow of the moment, every man present, who had a hat or breeches of English workmanship, pulled it off and threw it most undauntedly into the flames—to the irreparable detriment, loss and ruin of the English manufacturers. In commemoration of this great exploit, they erected a pole on the spot, with a device on the top intended to represent the province of Nieuw Nederlandts destroying Great Britain, under the similitude of an Eagle picking the little Island of Old England out of the globe; but either through the unskillfulness of the sculptor, or his ill timed waggery, it bore a striking resemblance to a goose, vainly striving to get hold of a dumpling.

CHAP. V.

Shewing how the grand Council of the New Netherlands came to be miraculously gifted with long tongues.—Together with a great triumph of Economy.

It will need but very little witchcraft on the part of my enlightened reader—particularly if he is in any wise acquainted with the ways and habits of that most potent and blustering monarch, the sovereign people—to discover, that notwithstanding all the incredible bustle and talk of war that stunned him in the last chapter, the renowned city of New Amsterdam is in sad reality, not a whit better prepared for defence than before. Now, though the people, having got over the first alarm, and finding no enemy immediately at hand, had with that valour of tongue, for which your illustrious rabble is so famous, run into the opposite extreme, and by dint of gallant vapouring and rodomontado had actually talked themselves into the opinion that they were the bravest and most powerful people under the sun, yet were the privy councillors of Peter Stuyvesant somewhat dubious on that point. They dreaded moreover lest that stern hero should return and find, that instead of obeying his peremptory orders, they had wasted their time in listening

to the valiant hectorings of the mob, than which they well knew there was nothing he held in more exalted contempt.

To make up therefore as speedily as possible for lost time, a grand divan of the councillors and robustious Burgomasters was convened, to talk over the critical state of the province and devise measures for its safety. Two things were unanimously agreed upon in this venerable assembly: first, that the city required to be put in a state of defence—and secondly, That as the danger was imminent, there should no time be lost—which points being settled, they immediately fell to making long speeches and belabouring one another in endless and intemperate disputes. For about this time was this unhappy city first visited by that talking endemic so universally prevalent in this country, and which so invariably evinces itself, wherever a number of wise men assemble together; breaking out in long, windy speeches; caused, as physicians suppose, by the foul air which is ever generated in a crowd. Now it was, moreover, that they first introduced the ingenious method of measuring the merits of an harangue by the hour-glass; he being considered the ablest orator who spoke longest on a question—For which excellent invention it is recorded, we are indebted to the same profound dutch critic who judged of books by their bulk,

and gave a prize medal to a stupendous volume of flummery—because it was “as tick as a cheese.”

The reporters of the day, therefore, in publishing the debates of the grand council, seem merely to have noticed the length of time each member was on the floor—and the only record I can find of the proceedings in the important business of which we are treating, mentions, that “Mynheer——made a very animated speech of six hours and a half, in favour of fortification—He was followed by Mynheer——on the other side, who spoke with great clearness and precision for about eight hours—Mynheer——suggested an amendment of the bill by substituting in the eighth line, the words ‘*four and twenty*,’ instead of ‘twenty four,’ in support of which he offered a few remarks, which only took up three hours and a quarter—and was followed by Mynheer Windroer in a most pithy, nervous, concise, elegant, ironical, argumentative strain of eloquence, superior to any thing which ever issued from the lips of a Cicero, a Demosthenes, or any orator, either of antient or modern times—he occupied the floor the whole of yesterday; this morning he arose in continuation, and is in the middle of the second branch of his discourse, at this present writing; having already carried the council through their second nap—We regret,” concludes this worthy reporter, “that the irresistable propensity of our Stenographer to nod, will prevent us from

giving the substance of this truly luminous and *lengthy* speech."

This sudden passion for endless harangues, so little consonant with the customary gravity and taciturnity of our sage forefathers, is supposed by certain learned philosophers of the time, to have been imbibed, together with divers other barbarous propensities, from their savage neighbours; who were peculiarly noted for their *long talks* and *council fires*; and who would never undertake any affair of the least importance, without previous debates and harangues among their chiefs and *old men*. But let its origin be what it may, it is without doubt a cruel and distressing disease, which has never been eradicated from the body politic to this day; but is continually breaking out, on all occasions of great agitation, in alarming and obnoxious flatulencies, whereby the said body politic is grievously afflicted, as with a wind cholic.

Thus then did Madam Wisdom, (who for some unaccountable, but doubtlessly whimsical reason, the wits of antiquity have represented under the form of a woman) seem to take a mischievous pleasure in jilting the grave and venerable counsellors of New Amsterdam. The old factions of Square heads and Platter Breeches, which had been almost strangled by the herculean grasp of Peter Stuyvesant, now sprung up with tenfold violence—To complete the public confusion and bewilder-

ment, the fatal word *Economy*, which one would have thought was dead and buried with William the Testy, was once more set afloat, like the apple of discord, in the grand council of the New Netherlands—according to which sound principle of policy, it was deemed more expedient to throw away twenty thousand guilders upon an inefficient plan of defence, than thirty thousand on a good and substantial one—the province thus making a clear saving of ten thousand guilders.

But when they came to discuss the mode of defence, then began a war of words that baffles all description. The members being, as I observed, drawn out into opposite parties, were enabled to proceed with amazing system and regularity in the discussion of the questions before them. Whatever was proposed by a Square head, was opposed by the whole tribe of Platter breeches, who like true politicians, considered it their first duty to effect the downfall of the Square heads—their second, to elevate themselves, and their third, to consult the welfare of the country. This at least was the creed of the most upright among the party, for as to the great mass, they left the third consideration out of the question altogether.

In this great collision of hard heads, it is astonishing the number of projects for defence, that were struck out, not one of which had ever been heard of before, nor has been heard of since, unless

it be in very modern days—projects that threw the windmill system of the ingenious Kieft completely in the back ground—Still, however, nothing could be decided on, for as fast as a formidable host of air castles were reared by one party, they were demolished by the other—the simple populace stood gazing in anxious expectation of the mighty egg, that was to be hatched, with all this cackling, but they gazed in vain, for it appeared that the grand council was determined to protect the province as did the noble and gigantic Pantagruel his army—by covering it with his tongue.

Indeed there was a magnanimous portion of the members, fat, self important old burghers, who smoked their pipes and said nothing, excepting to negative every plan of defence that was offered. These were of that class of wealthy old citizens who having amassed a fortune, button up their pockets, shut their mouths, look rich and are good for nothing all the rest of their lives. Like some phlegmatic oyster, which having swallowed a pearl, closes its shell, settles down in the mud and parts with its life sooner than its treasure. Every plan of defence seemed to these worthy old gentlemen pregnant with ruin. An armed force was a legion of locusts, preying upon the public property—to fit out a naval armament was to throw their money into the sea—to build fortifications was to bury it in the dirt. In short they settled it as a sovereign

maxim, so long as their pockets were full, no matter how much they were drubbed—A kick left no scar—a broken head cured itself—but an empty purse was of all maladies the slowest to heal, and one in which nature did nothing for the patient.

Thus did this venerable assembly of *sages*, lavish away that time which the urgency of affairs rendered invaluable, in empty brawls and long winded arguments, without even agreeing, except on the point with which they started, namely, that there was no time to be lost, and delay was ruinous. At length St. Nicholas, taking compassion on their distracted situation, and anxious to preserve them from total anarchy, so ordered, that in the midst of one of their most noisy and patriotic debates, when they had nearly fallen to loggerheads in consequence of not being able to convince each other, the question was happily settled by a messenger, who bounced into the chamber and informed them, that the hostile fleet had arrived, and was actually advancing up the bay!

Thus was all further necessity of either fortifying or disputing completely obviated, and thus was the grand council saved a world of words, and the province a world of expense—a most absolute and glorious triumph of economy!

CHAP. VI.

In which the troubles of New Amsterdam appear to thicken—Shewing the bravery in time of peril, of a people who defend themselves by resolutions.

LIKE a ward committee of politic cats, who, when engaged in clamorous gibberings, and catter-waulings, eyeing one another with hideous grimaces, spitting in each other's faces, and on the point of breaking forth into a general clapper-clawing, are suddenly put to scampering rout and confusion by the startling appearance of a house-dog—So was the no less vociferous council of New Amsterdam, amazed, astounded, and totally dispersed, by the sudden arrival of the enemy. Every member made the best of his way home, waddling along as fast as his short legs could sag under their heavy burthen, and wheezing as he went with corpulency and terror. When he arrived at his castle, he barricadoed the street door, and buried himself in the cider cellar, without daring to peep out, lest he should have his head carried off by a cannon ball.

The sovereign people all crowded into the market place, herding together with the instinct of sheep who seek for safety in each others company, when the shepherd and his dog are absent and the wolf is prowling round the fold. Far from finding relief

however, they only increased each others terrors. Each man looked ruefully in his neighbour's face, in search of encouragement, but only found in its woe begone lineaments, a confirmation of his own dismay. Not a word now was to be heard of conquering Great Britain, not a whisper about the sovereign virtues of economy—while the old women heightened the general gloom by clamorously bewailing their fate, and incessantly calling for protection on St. Nicholas and Peter Stuyvesant.

Oh how did they bewail the absence of the lion hearted Peter!—and how did they long for the comforting presence of Antony Van Corlear! Indeed a gloomy uncertainty hung over the fate of these adventurous heroes. Day after day had elapsed since the alarming message from the governor, without bringing any further tidings of his safety. Many a fearful conjecture was hazarded as to what had befallen him and his loyal squire. Had they not been devoured alive by the Cannibals of Piscataway and Cape Cod?—where they not put to the question by the great council of Amphyctions?—where they not smothered in onions by the terrible men of Pyquag?—In the midst of this consternation and perplexity, when horror like a mighty night-mare sat brooding upon the little, fat, plethoric city of New Amsterdam, the ears of the multitude were suddenly startled by a strange and distant sound—it approached—it grew louder and

louder—and now it resounded at the city gate. The public could not be mistaken in the well known sound—A shout of joy burst from their lips as the gallant Peter, covered with dust, and followed by his faithful trumpeter, came galloping into the market place.

The first transports of the populace having subsided, they gathered round the honest Antony, as he dismounted from his horse, overwhelming him with greetings and congratulations. In breathless accents he related to them the marvellous adventures through which the old governor and himself had gone, in making their escape from the clutches of the terrible Amphyctions. But though the Stuyvesant Manuscript, with its customary minuteness where any thing touching the great Peter is concerned, is very particular, as to the incidents of this masterly retreat, yet the critical state of the public affairs, will not allow me to indulge in a full recital thereof. Let it suffice to say, that while Peter Stuyvesant was anxiously revolving in his mind, how he could make good his escape with honour and dignity, certain of the ships sent out for the conquest of the Manhattoes touched at the Eastern ports, to obtain needful supplies, and to call on the grand council of the league, for its promised co-operation. Upon hearing of this, the vigilant Peter, perceiving that a moment's delay was fatal, made a secret and precipitate decampment, though

much did it grieve his lofty soul, to be obliged to turn his back even upon a nation of foes. Many hair-breadth scapes and divers perilous mishaps, did they sustain, as they scoured, without sound of trumpet, through the fair regions of the east. Already was the country in an uproar with hostile preparation—and they were obliged to take a large circuit in their flight, lurking along, through the woody mountains of the Devil's back-bone; from whence the valiant Peter sallied forth one day, like a lion, and put to route a whole legion of squatters, consisting of three generations of a prolific family, who were already on their way to take possession of some corner of the New Netherlands. Nay, the faithful Antony had great difficulty at sundry times, to prevent him in the excess of his wrath, from descending down from the mountains, and falling sword in hand, upon certain of the border towns, who were marshalling forth their draggle-tailed militia.

The first movements of the governor on reaching his dwelling, was to mount the roof, from whence he contemplated with rueful aspect the hostile squadron. This had already come to anchor in the bay, and consisted of two stout frigates, having on board, as John Josselyn, gent. informs us, three hundred valiant red coats. Having taken this survey, he sat himself down, and wrote an epistle to the commander, demanding the reason of

his anchoring in the harbour without obtaining previous permission so to do. This letter was couched in the most dignified and courteous terms, though I have it from undoubted authority, that his teeth were clinched, and he had a bitter sardonic grin upon his visage, all the while he wrote. Having dispatched his letter, the grim Peter stumped to and fro about the town, with a most war-betokening countenance, his hands thrust into his breeches pockets, and whistling a low dutch psalm tune, which bore no small resemblance to the music of a north east wind, when a storm is brewing—the very dogs as they eyed him skulked away in dismay—while all the old and ugly women of New Amsterdam, ran howling at his heels, imploring him to save them from murder, robbery, and piteous ravishment!

The reply of Col. Nichols, who commanded the invaders, was couched in terms of equal courtesy with the letter of the governor—declaring the right and title of his British Majesty to the province; where he affirmed the dutch to be mere interlopers; and demanding that the town, forts, &c. should be forthwith rendered into his majesty's obedience and protection—promising at the same time, life, liberty, estate and free trade, to every dutch denizen, who should readily submit to his majesty's government.

Peter Stuyvesant read over this friendly epistle with some such harmony of aspect as we may sup-

pose a crusty farmer, who has long been fattening upon his neighbour's soil, reads the loving letter of John Stiles, that warns him of an action of ejectment. The old governor however, was not to be taken by surprize, but thrusting, according to custom, a huge quid of tobacco into his cheek, and cramming the summons into his breeches pocket, promised to answer it the next morning. In the mean time he called a general council of war of his privy councillors and Burgomasters, not for the purpose of asking their advice, for that, as has been already shewn, he valued not a rush ; but to make known unto them his sovereign determination, and require their prompt adherence.

Before, however, he convened his council he resolved upon three important points; *first*, never to give up the city without a little hard fighting, for he deemed it highly derogatory to the dignity of so renowned a city, to suffer itself to be captured and stripped, without receiving a few kicks into the bargain. *Secondly*, that the majority of his grand council were a crew of arrant platter breeches, utterly destitute of true bottom—and *thirdly*—that he would not therefore suffer them to see the summons of Col. Nichols, lest the easy terms it held out, might induce them to clamour for a surrender.

His orders being duly promulgated, it was a piteous sight to behold the late valiant Burgomasters, who had demolished the whole British empire

in their harangues; peeping ruefully out of their nests, and then crawling cautiously forth, dodging through narrow lanes and alleys; starting at every little dog that barked, as if it had been a discharge of artillery—mistaking lamp posts for British grenadiers, and in the excess of their panic, metamorphosing pumps into formidable soldiers, levelling blunderbusses at their bosoms! Having however, in despite of numerous perils and difficulties of the kind, arrived safe, without the loss of a single man, at the hall of assembly, they took their seats and awaited in fearful silence the arrival of the governor. In a few moments the wooden leg of the intrepid Peter, was heard in regular and stout-hearted thumps upon the stair case—He entered the chamber, arrayed in full suit of regimentals, a more than ordinary quantity of flour shook into his ear locks, and carrying his trusty toledo, not girded on his thigh, but tucked under his arm. As the governor never equipped himself in this portentous manner, unless something of martial nature was working within his fearless pericranium, his council regarded him ruefully as a very Janus bearing fire and sword in his iron countenance—and forgot to light their pipes in breathless suspense.

The great Peter was as eloquent as he was valorous—indeed these two rare qualities seemed to go hand in hand in his composition; and, unlike most great statesmen, whose victories are only

confined to the bloodless field of argument, he was always ready to enforce his hardy words, by no less hardy deeds. Like another Gustavus addressing his Dalecarlians, he touched upon the perils and hardships he had sustained in escaping from his inexorable foes—He next reproached the council for wasting in idle debate and impertinent personalities that time which should have been devoted to their country—he then recalled the golden days of former prosperity, which were only to be regained by manfully withstanding their enemies—endeavoured to rouse their martial fire, by reminding them of the time, when, before the frowning walls of fort Christina, he led them on to victory—when they had subdued a whole army of fifty Swedes—and subjugated an immense extent of uninhabited territory.—He strove likewise to awaken their confidence, by assuring them of the protection of St. Nicholas ; who had hitherto maintained them in safety ; amid all the savages of the wilderness, the witches and squatters of the east, and the giants of Merry land. Finally he informed them of the insolent summons he had received, to surrender, but concluded by swearing to defend the province as long as heaven was on his side, and he had a wooden leg to stand upon. Which noble sentence he emphasized by a tremendous thwack with the broad side of his sword upon the table, that totally electrified his auditors.

The privy councillors, who had long been accustomed to the governor's way, and in fact had been brought into as perfect discipline, as were ever the soldiers of the great Frederick ; saw that there was no use in saying a word—so lighted their pipes and smoked away in silence, like fat and discreet councillors. But the Burgomasters being less under the governor's controul—considering themselves as representatives of the sovereign people, and being moreover inflated with considerable importance and self-sufficiency, which they had acquired at those notable schools of wisdom and morality, the popular meetings ; (whereof in fact I am told certain of them had been chairmen) these I say, were not so easily satisfied. Mustering up fresh spirit, when they found there was some chance of escaping from their present perilous jeopardy, without the disagreeable alternative of fighting, they arrogantly requested a copy of the summons to surrender, that they might shew it to a general meeting of the people.

So insolent and mutinous a request would have been enough to have roused the gorge of the tranquil Van Twiller himself—what then must have been its effect upon the great Stuyvesant, who was not only a Dutchman, a Governor, and a valiant wooden legged soldier to boot, but withal a man of the most stomachful and gunpowder disposition. He burst forth into a blaze of heroical indignation,

to which the famous rage of Achilles was a mere pouting fit—swore not a mother's son of them should see a syllable of it—that they deserved, every one of them, to be hung, drawn and quartered, for traitorously daring to question the infallibility of government—that as to their advice or concurrence, he did not care a whiff of tobacco for either—that he had long been harrassed and thwarted by their cowardly councils ; but that they might henceforth go home, and go to bed like old women; for he was determined to defend the colony himself, without the assistance of them or their adherents ! So saying he tucked his sword under his arm, cocked his hat upon his head, and girding up his loins, stumped indignantly out of the council chamber—every body making room for him as he passed.

No sooner had he gone than the sturdy Burgomasters called a public meeting in front of the Stadt-house, where they appointed as chairman one Dofue Roerback, a mighty gingerbread baker in the land, and formerly of the cabinet of William the Testy. He was looked up to, with great reverence by the populace, who considered him a man of dark knowledge, seeing he was the first that imprinted new year cakes with the mysterious hieroglyphics of the Cock and Breeches, and such like magical devices.

This great Burgomaster, who still chewed the cud of ill will against the valiant Stuyvesant, in consequence of having been ignominiously kicked out of his cabinet—addressed the greasy multitude in an exceeding long-winded speech, in which he informed them of the courteous summons to surrender—of the governor's refusal to comply therewith—of his denying the public a sight of the summons, which he had no doubt, from the well known liberality, humanity, and forbearance, of the British nation, contained conditions highly to the honour and advantage of the province.

He then proceeded to speak of his excellency in high sounding terms, suitable to the dignity and grandeur of his station, comparing him to Nero, Caligula, and other great men of yore, of whom he had often heard William the Testy discourse in his learned moods—Assuring the people, that the history of the world did not contain a despotic outrage to equal the present, for atrocity, cruelty, tyranny, blood-thirstiness, battle, murder, and sudden death—that it would be recorded in letters of fire, on the blood-stained tablet of history! that ages would roll back with sudden horror, when they came to view it! That the womb of time—(by the way your orators and writers take strange liberties with the womb of time, though some would fain have us believe that time is an old gentleman) that the womb of time, pregnant as it was with direful hor-

rors, would never produce a parallel enormity!—that posterity would be struck dumb with petrifying astonishment, and howl in unavailing indignation, over the records of irremediable barbarity!—With a variety of other heart-rending, soul stirring tropes and figures, which I cannot enumerate—Neither indeed need I, for they were exactly the same that are used in all popular harangues and fourth of July orations at the present day, and may be classed in rhetoric under the general title of RIGMAROLE.

The patriotic address of Burgomaster Roerbäck had a wonderful effect upon the populace, who, though a race of sober phlegmatic Dutchmen, were amazing quick at discerning insults; for your ragged rabble, though it may bear injuries without a murmur, yet is always marvellously jealous of its sovereign dignity. They immediately fell into the pangs of tumultuous labour, and brought forth, not only a string of right wise and valiant resolutions, but likewise a most resolute memorial, addressed to the governor, remonstrating at his conduct—which he no sooner received than he handed it into the fire; and thus deprived posterity of an invaluable document, that might have served as a precedent to the enlightened cobblers and taylor, of the present day, in their sage intermeddlings with politics.

CHAP. VII.

Containing a doleful disaster of Antony the Trumpeter—And how Peter Stuyvesant, like a second Cromwell suddenly dissolved a rump Parliament.

Now did the high minded Pieter *de Groodt*, shower down a pannier load of benedictions upon his Burgomasters, for a set of self-willed, obstinate, headstrong varlets, who would neither be convinced nor persuaded; and determined henceforth to have nothing more to do with them, but to consult merely the opinion of his privy councillors, which he knew from experience to be the best in the world—inasmuch as it never differed from his own. Nor did he omit, now that his hand was in, to bestow some thousand left-handed compliments upon the sovereign people; whom he railed at for a herd of arrant poltroons, who had no relish for the glorious hardships and illustrious misadventures of battle—but would rather stay at home, and eat and sleep in ignoble ease, than gain immortality and a broken head, by valiantly fighting in a ditch!

Resolutely bent however upon defending his beloved city, in despite even of itself, he called unto him his trusty Van Corlear, who was his right hand man in all times of emergency. Him did he adjure to take his war denouncing trumpet, and

mounting his horse, to beat up the country, night and day—Sounding the alarm along the pastoral borders of the Bronx—startling the wild solitudes of Croton, arousing the rugged yeomanry of Weehawk and Hoboken—the mighty men of battle of Tappan Bay*—and the brave boys of Tarry town and Sleepy hollow—together with all the other warriors of the country round about; charging them one and all, to sling their powder horns, shoulder their fowling pieces, and march merrily down to the Manhattoes.

Now there was nothing in all the world, the divine sex excepted, that Antony Van Corlear loved better than errands of this kind. So just stopping to take a lusty dinner, and bracing to his side his junk bottle, well charged with heart inspiring Hollands, he issued jollily from the city gate, that looked out upon what is at present called Broadway; sounding as usual a farewell strain, that rung in sprightly echoes through the winding streets of New Amsterdam—Alas! never more were they to be gladdened by the melody of their favourite trumpeter!

It was a dark and stormy night when the good Antony arrived at the famous creek (sagely denominated *Hærlém river*) which separates the

* A corruption of Top-paun; so called from a tribe of Indians which boasted 150 fighting men. See Ogilvie. EDITOR.

island of Manna-hata from the main land. The wind was high, the elements were in an uproar, and no Charon could be found to ferry the adventurous sounder of brass across the water. For a short time he vapoured like an impatient ghost upon the brink, and then, bethinking himself of the urgency of his errand, took a hearty embrace of his stone bottle, swore most valourously that he would swim across, *en spijt den Duyvel* (in spite of the devil!) and daringly plunged into the stream.—Luckless Antony! scarce had he buffeted half way over, when he was observed to struggle most violently as if battling with the spirit of the waters—instinctively he put his trumpet to his mouth and giving a vehement blast—sunk forever to the bottom!

The potent clangour of his trumpet, like the ivory horn of the renowned Paladin Orlando, when expiring in the glorious field of Roncesvalles, rung far and wide through the country, alarming the neighbours round, who hurried in amazement to the spot—Here an old Dutch burgher, famed for his veracity, and who had been a witness of the fact, related to them the melancholy affair; with the fearful addition (to which I am slow of giving belief) that he saw the duyvel, in the shape of a huge Moss-bonker with an invisible fiery tail, and vomiting boiling water, seize the sturdy Antony by the leg, and drag him beneath the waves. Cer-

tain it is, the place, with the adjoining promontory, which projects into the Hudson, has been called *Spijt den duyvel*, or *Spiking devil*, ever since—the restless ghost of the unfortunate Antony still haunts the surrounding solitudes, and his trumpet has often been heard by the neighbours, of a stormy night, mingling with the howling of the blast. No body ever attempts to swim over the creek after dark; on the contrary, a bridge has been built to guard against such melancholy accidents in future—and as to Moss-bonkers, they are held in such abhorrence, that no true Dutchman will admit them to his table, who loves good fish, and hates the devil.

Such was the end of Antony Van Corlear—a man deserving of a better fate. He lived roundly and soundly, like a true and jolly batchelor, until the day of his death; but though he was never married, yet did he leave behind some two or three dozen children, in different parts of the country—fine, chubby, brawling, flatulent little urchins, from whom, if legends speak true, (and they are not apt to lie) did descend the innumerable race of editors, who people and defend this country, and who are bountifully paid by the people for keeping up a constant alarm—and making them miserable. Would that they inherited the worth, as they do the wind, of their renowned progenitor!

The tidings of this lamentable catastrophe imparted a severer pang to the bosom of Peter Stuy-

vesant, than did even the invasion of his beloved Amsterdam. It came ruthlessly home to those sweet affections that grow close around the heart, and are nourished by its warmest current. As some lorn pilgrim wandering in trackless wastes, while the rude tempest whistles through his hoary locks, and dreary night is gathering around, sees stretched cold and lifeless, his faithful dog—the sole companion of his lonely journeying, who had shared his solitary meal, who had so often licked his hand in humble gratitude, who had lain in his bosom, and been unto him as a child—So did the generous hearted hero of the Manhattoes contemplate the untimely end of his faithful Antony. He had been the humble attendant of his footsteps—he had cheered him in many a heavy hour, by his honest gaiety, and had followed him in loyalty and affection, through many a scene of direful peril and mishap—he was gone forever—and that too, at a moment when every mongrel cur seemed skulking from his side—This—Peter Stuyvesant—this was the moment to try thy magnanimity; and this was the moment, when thou didst indeed shine forth—*Peter the Headstrong!*

The glare of day had long dispelled the horrors of the last stormy night; still all was dull and gloomy. The late jovial Apollo hid his face behind lugubrious clouds, peeping out now and then, for an instant, as if anxious, yet fearful, to see what was going

on, in his favourite city. This was the eventful morning, when the great Peter was to give his reply, to the audacious summons of the invaders. Already was he closetted with his privy council, sitting in grim state, brooding over the fate of his favourite trumpeter, and anon boiling with indignation as the insolence of his recreant Burgomasters flashed upon his mind. While in this state of irritation, a courier arrived in all haste from Winthrop, the subtle governor of Connecticut, counselling him in the most affectionate and disinterested manner to surrender the province, and magnifying the dangers and calamities to which a refusal would subject him.—What a moment was this to intrude officious advice upon a man, who never took advice in his whole life!—The fiery old governor strode up and down the chamber, with a vehemence, that made the bosoms of his councillors to quake with awe—railing at his unlucky fate, that thus made him the constant butt of factious subjects, and jesuitical advisers.

Just at this ill chosen juncture, the officious Burgomasters, who were now completely on the watch, and had got wind of the arrival of mysterious dispatches, came marching in a resolute body, into the room, with a legion of Schepens and toad-eaters at their heels, and abruptly demanded a perusal of the letter. Thus to be broken in upon by what he esteemed a “rascal rabble,” and that too at the very

moment he was grinding under an irritation from abroad, was too much for the spleen of the choleric Peter. He tore the letter in a thousand pieces*—threw it in the face of the nearest Burgomaster—broke his pipe over the head of the next—hurled his spitting box at an unlucky Schepen, who was just making a masterly retreat out at the door, and finally dissolved the whole meeting *sine die*, by kicking them down stairs with his wooden leg!

As soon as the Burgomasters could recover from the confusion into which their sudden exit had thrown them, and had taken a little time to breathe, they protested against the conduct of the governor, which they did not hesitate to pronounce tyrannical, unconstitutional, highly indecent, and somewhat disrespectful. They then called a public meeting, where they read the protest, and addressing the assembly in a set speech related at full length, and with appropriate colouring and exaggeration, the despotic and vindictive deportment of the governor; declaring that, for their own parts, they did not value a straw the being kicked, cuffed, and mauled by the timber toe of his excellency, but they felt for the dignity of the sovereign people, thus rudely insulted by the outrage committed on the seats of honour of their representatives. The latter part of the harangue had a violent effect upon

* Smith's History of N. Y.

the sensibility of the people, as it came home at once, to that delicacy of feeling and jealous pride of character, vested in all true mobs : and there is no knowing to what act of resentment they might have been provoked, against the redoubtable Hardkoppig Piet—had not the greasy rogues been somewhat more afraid of their sturdy old governor, than they were of St. Nicholas, the English—or the D——l himself.

CHAP. VIII.

Shewing how Peter Stuyvesant defended the city of New Amsterdam for several days, by dint of the strength of his head.

PAUSE, oh most considerate reader! and contemplate for a moment the sublime and melancholy scene, which the present crisis of our history presents! An illustrious and venerable little town—the metropolis of an immense extent of flourishing but unenlightened, because uninhabited country—Garrisoned by a doughty host of orators, chairmen, committee-men, Burgomasters, Schepens and old women—governed by a determined and strong headed warrior, and fortified by mud batteries, pallisadoes and resolutions.—blockaded by sea, beleaguered by land, and threatened with direful desolation from without; while its very vitals are torn, and griped, and becholiced with internal faction and commotion! Never did the historic pen record a page of more complicated distress, unless it be the strife that distracted the Israelites during the siege of Jerusalem—where discordant parties were cutting each others throats, at the moment when the victorious legions of Titus had toppled down their bulwarks, and were carrying fire and sword, into the very sanctum sanctorum of the temple.

Governor Stuyvesant having triumphantly, as has been recorded, put his grand council to the rout, and thus delivered himself from a multitude of impertinent advisers, dispatched a categorical reply to the commanders of the invading squadron; wherein he asserted the right and title of their High Mightinesses the lords States general to the province of New Netherlands, and trusting in the righteousness of his cause, set the whole British nation at defiance! My anxiety to extricate my readers, and myself, from these disastrous scenes, prevents me from giving the whole of this most courteous and gallant letter, which concluded in these manly and affectionate terms.

“As touching the threats in your conclusion,
“we have nothing to answer, only that we fear
“nothing but what God, (who is as just as merci-
“ful) shall lay upon us; all things being in his
“gracious disposal, and we may as well be pre-
“served by him with small forces, as by a great
“army; which makes us to wish you all happiness
“and prosperity, and recommend you to his pro-
“tection—My lords your thrice humble and affec-
“tionate servant and friend

P. Stuyvesant.”

Thus having resolutely thrown his gauntlet, the brave Hard-koppig Piet stuck a huge pair of horse pistols in his belt, girded an immense powder

horn on his side—thrust his sound leg into a Hessian boot, and clapping his fierce little war hat on top of his head—paraded up and down in front of his house, determined to defend his beloved city to the last.

While all these woeful struggles and dissensions were prevailing in the unhappy little city of New Amsterdam, and while its worthy but ill starred governor was framing the above quoted letter, the English commanders did not remain idle. They had agents secretly employed to foment the fears and clamours of the populace, and moreover circulated far and wide through the adjacent country a proclamation, repeating the terms they had already held out in their summons to surrender, and beguiling the simple Nederlanders with the most crafty and conciliating professions. They promised every man who voluntarily submitted to the authority of his British majesty, that he should retain peaceable possession of his house, his vrouw and his cabbage garden. That he should be suffered to smoke his pipe, speak dutch, wear as many breeches as he pleased, and import bricks, tiles and stone jugs from Holland, instead of manufacturing them on the spot—That he should on no account be compelled to learn the English language, or keep accounts in any other way than by casting them up upon his fingers, and chalking them down upon the crown of his hat; as is still

observed among the dutch yeomanry at the present day. That every man should be allowed quietly to inherit his father's hat, coat, shoe-buckles, pipe, and every other personal appendage, and that no man should be obliged to conform to any improvements, inventions, or any other modern innovations, but on the contrary should be permitted to build his house, follow his trade, manage his farm, rear his hogs, and educate his children, precisely as his ancestors did before him since time immemorial—Finally, that he should have all the benefits of free trade, and should not be required to acknowledge any other saint in the calendar than saint Nicholas, who should thenceforward, as before, be considered the tutelar saint of the city.

These terms, as may be supposed, appeared very satisfactory to the people; who had a great disposition to enjoy their property unmolested, and a most singular aversion to engage in a contest, where they could gain little more than honour and broken heads—the first of which they held in philosophic indifference, the latter in utter detestation. By these insidious means, therefore, did the English succeed in alienating the confidence and affections of the populace from their gallant old governor, whom they considered as obstinately bent upon running them into hideous misadventures, and did not hesitate to speak their minds freely, and abuse him most heartily—behind his back.

Like as a mighty grampus, who though assailed and buffeted by roaring waves and brawling surges, still keeps on an undeviating course; and though overwhelmed by boisterous billows, still emerges from the troubled deep, spouting and blowing with tenfold violence—so did the inflexible Peter pursue, unwavering, his determined career, and rise contemptuous, above the clamours of the rabble.

But when the British warriors found by the tenor of his reply that he set their power at defiance, they forthwith dispatched recruiting officers to Jamaica, and Jericho, and Nineveh, and Quag, and Patchog, and all those redoubtable towns which had been subdued of yore by the immortal Stoffel Brinkerhoff, stirring up the valiant progeny of Preserved Fish, and Determined Cock, and those other illustrious squatters, to assail the city of New Amsterdam by land. In the mean while the hostile ships made awful preparation to commence a vehement assault by water.

The streets of New Amsterdam now presented a scene of wild dismay and consternation. In vain did the gallant Stuyvesant order the citizens to arm and assemble in the public square or market place. The whole party of Platter breeches in the course of a single night had changed into arrant old women—a metamorphosis only to be paralleled by the prodigies recorded by Livy as having happened at Rome at the approach of Hannibal, when statues sweated in

pure affright, goats were converted into sheep, and cocks turning into hens ran cackling about the streets.

The harrassed Peter, thus menaced from without and tormented from within—baited by the burgomasters and hooted at by the rabble, chafed and growled and raged like a furious bear tied to a stake and worried by a legion of scoundrel curs. Finding however that all further attempt to defend the city was in vain, and hearing that an irruption of borderers and moss troopers was ready to deluge him from the east, he was at length compelled, in spite of his mighty heart, which swelled in his throat until it had nearly choked him, to consent to a treaty of surrender.

Words cannot express the transports of the people, on receiving this agreeable intelligence; had they obtained a conquest over their enemies, they could not have indulged greater delight—The streets resounded with their congratulations—they extolled their governor as the father and deliverer of his country.—they crowded to his house to testify their gratitude, and were ten times more noisy in their plaudits, than when he returned, with victory perched upon his beaver, from the glorious capture of Fort Christina—But the indignant Peter shut up his doors and windows and took refuge in the innermost recesses of his mansion, that he might not hear the ignoble rejoicings of the rabble.

In consequence of this consent of the governor, a parley was demanded of the besieging forces to treat of the terms of surrender. Accordingly a deputation of six commissioners was appointed on both sides, and on the 27th August, 1664, a capitulation highly favourable to the province, and honourable to Peter Stuyvesant, was agreed to by the enemy, who had conceived a high opinion of the valour of the men of the Manhattoes, and the magnanimity and unbounded discretion of their governor.

One thing alone remained, which was, that the articles of surrender should be ratified, and signed by the chivalric Peter—When the commissioners respectfully waited upon him for this purpose, they were received by the hardy old warrior, with the most grim and bitter courtesy. His warlike accoutrements were laid aside—an old India night gown was wrapped around his rugged limbs, a red woollen night cap overshadowed his frowning brow, and an iron grey beard, of three days growth, heightened the grizzly terrors of his visage. Thrice did he seize a little worn out stump of a pen, and essay to sign the loathesome paper—thrice did he clinch his teeth, and make a most horrible countenance, as though a pestiferous dose of rhubarb, senna, and ipecacuanha, had been offered to his lips, at length dashing it from him, he seized his brass hilted sword, and jerking it from the scabbard, swore by

St. Nicholas, he'd sooner die than yield to any power under heaven.

In vain was every attempt to shake this sturdy resolution—menaces, remonstrances, revilings were exhausted to no purpose—for two whole days was the house of the valiant Pêter besieged by the clamorous rabble, and for two whole days did he betake himself to his arms, and persist in a magnanimous refusal to ratify the capitulation—thus, like a second Horatius Cocles, bearing the whole brunt of war, and defending this modern Rome, with the prowess of his single arm!

At length the populace finding that boisterous measures, did but incense more determined opposition, bethought themselves of a humble expedient, by which haply, the governor's lofty ire might be soothed, and his resolution undermined. And now a solemn and mournful procession, headed by the Burgomasters, and Schepens, and followed by the enlightened vulgar, moves slowly to the governor's dwelling—bearing the unfortunate capitulation. Here they found the stout old hero, drawn up like a giant into his castle—the doors strongly barricadoed, and himself in full regimentals, with his cocked hat on his head, firmly posted with a blunderbuss at the garret window.

There was something in this formidable position that struck even the ignoble vulgar, with awe and admiration. The brawling multitude could not but

reflect with self abasement, upon their own degenerate conduct, when they beheld their hardy but deserted old governor, thus faithful to his post, like a forlorn hope, and fully prepared to defend his ungrateful city to the last. These compunctions however, were soon overwhelmed, by the recurring tide of public apprehension. The populace arranged themselves before the house, taking off their hats, with most respectful humility—One of the Burgomasters, of that popular class of orators, who, as old Sallust observes, are “talkative rather than eloquent” stepped forth and addressed the governor in a speech of three hours length; detailing in the most pathetic terms the calamitous situation of the province, and urging him in a constant repetition of the same arguments and words, to sign the capitulation.

The mighty Peter eyed him from his little garret window in grim silence—now and then his eye would glance over the surrounding rabble, and an indignant grin, like that of an angry mastiff, would mark his iron visage—But though he was a man of most undaunted mettle—though he had a heart as big as an ox, and a head that would have set adamant to scorn—yet after all he was a mere mortal :—wearied out by these repeated oppositions and this eternal haranguing, and perceiving that unless he complied, the inhabitants would follow their inclinations, or rather their fears, without waiting for

his consent, he testily ordered them to hand him up the paper. It was accordingly hoisted to him on the end of a pole, and having scrawled his name at the bottom of it, he excommunicated them all for a set of cowardly, mutinous, degenerate platter-breeches—threw the capitulation at their heads, slammed down the window, and was heard stumping down stairs with the most vehement indignation. The rabble incontinently took to their heels; even the Burgomasters were not slow in evacuating the premises, fearing lest the sturdy Peter might issue from his den, and greet them with some unwelcome testimonial of his displeasure.

CHAP. IX.

Containing reflections on the decline and fall of empires, with the final extinction of the Dutch Dynasty.

AMONG the numerous events, which are each in their turn the most direful and melancholy of all possible occurrences, in your interesting and authentic history; there is none that occasions such heart rending grief to your historian of sensibility, as the decline and fall of your renowned and mighty empires! Like your well disciplined funeral orator, whose feelings are properly tutored to ebb and flow, to blaze in enthusiastic eulogy, or gush in overwhelming sorrow—who has reduced his impetuous grief to a kind of manual—has prepared to slap his breast at a comma, strike his forehead at a semicolon; start with horror at a dash—and burst into an ungovernable paroxysm of despair at a note of admiration! Like unto him your woe begone historian ascends the rostrum; bends in dumb pathos over the ruins of departed greatness; casts an upbraiding eye to heaven, a glance of indignant misery on the surrounding world; settles his features into an expression of unutterable agony, and having by this eloquent preparation, invoked the whole animate and inanimate creation to unite

with him in sorrow, draws slowly his white handkerchief from his pocket, and as he applies it to his face, seems to sob to his readers, in the words of a most tear shedding dutch author, "You who have noses, prepare to blow them now!"—or rather, to quote more literally "let every man blow his own nose!"

Where is the reader who can contemplate without emotion, the disastrous events by which the great dynasties of the world have been extinguished? When wandering, with mental eye amid the awful and gigantic ruins of kingdoms, states and empires—marking the tremendous convulsions that shook their foundations and wrought their lamentable downfall—the bosom of the melancholy enquirer swells with sympathy, commensurate to the sublimity of the surrounding horrors—each petty feeling—each private misery, is overpowered and forgotten; like a helpless mortal struggling under the night mare; so the unhappy reader pants and groans, and labours, under one stupendous grief—one vast immoveable idea—one immense, one mountainous—one overwhelming mass of woe!

Behold the great Assyrian Empire, founded by Nimrod, that mighty hunter,; extending its domains over the fairest portion of the globe—encreasing in splendour through a long lapse of fifteen centuries, and terminating ingloriously in the reign of

the effeminate Sardinapalus, consumed in the conflagration of his capital by the Median Arbaces.

Behold its successor, the Median Empire, augmented by the warlike power of Persia; under the sceptre of the immortal Cyrus, and the Egyptian conquests of the desert-braving Cambyses—accumulating strength and glory during seven centuries—but shook to its centre, and finally overthrown, in the memorable battles of the Granicus, the Issus, and the plains of Arbela, by the all conquering arm of Alexander.

Behold next the Grecian Empire; brilliant, but brief, as the warlike meteor with which it rose and descended—existing but seven years, in a blaze of glory—and perishing, with its hero, in a scene of ignominious debauchery.

Behold next the Roman Eagle, fledged in her Ausonian aerie, but wheeling her victorious flight over the fertile plains of Asia—the burning deserts of Africa, and at length spreading wide her triumphant wings, the mistress of the world! But mark her fate—view the imperial Rome, the emporium of taste and science—the paragon of cities—the metropolis of the universe—ravaged, sacked and overturned by successive hordes of fierce barbarians—and the unwieldy empire, like a huge but over ripe pumpkin, splitting into the western empire of the renowned Charlemagne, and the eastern or Greek Empire of Leo the Great—which latter,

after enduring through six long centuries, is dismembered by the unhallowed hands of the Saracens.

Behold the Saracenic empire, swayed by the puissant Gengis Khan, lording it over these conquered domains, and, under the reign of Tamerlane subduing the whole Eastern region. Then cast an eye towards the Persian mountains. Mark how the fiery shepherd Othman, with his fierce compeers, descend like a whirlwind on the Nicomedian plains. Lo! the late fearless Saracen succumbs—he flies! he falls! His dynasty is destroyed, and the Ottoman crescent is reared triumphant on its ruins!

Behold—but why should we behold any more? Why should we rake among the ashes of extinguished greatness?—Kingdoms, Principalities, and Powers, have each had their rise, their progress, and their fall—each in its turn has swayed a mighty sceptre—each has returned to its primeval nothingness. And thus did it fare with the empire of their High Mightinesses, at the illustrious metropolis of the Manhattoes, under the peaceful reign of Walter the Doubter—the fractious reign of William the Testy, and the chivalric reign of Peter Stuyvesant—alias, Pieter de Groodt—alias, Hardkoppig-Piet—which meaneth Peter the Headstrong!

The patron of refinement, hospitality, and the elegant arts, it shone resplendent, like a jewel in a dunghill, deriving additional lustre from the bar-

barism of the savage tribes, and European hordes, by which it was surrounded. But alas! neither virtue, nor talents, eloquence, nor economy, can avert the inavertable stroke of fate. The Dutch Dynasty, pressed, and assailed on every side, approached to its destined end. It had been puffed, and blown up from small beginnings, to a most corpulent rotundity—it had resisted the constant incroachments of its neighbouring foes, with phlegmatic magnanimity—but the sudden shock of invasion was too much for its strength.

Thus have I seen a crew of truant urchins, beating and belabouring a distended bladder, which maintained its size, uninjured by their assaults—At length an unlucky brat, more knowing than the rest, collecting all his might, bounces down with his bottom upon the inflated globe—The contact of contending spheres is awful and destructive—the bloated membrane yields—it bursts, it explodes with a noise strange and equivocal, wonderfully resembling thunder—and is no more.

And now nought remains but sadly and reluctantly to deliver up this excellent little city into the hands of its invaders. Willingly would I, like the impetuous Peter, draw my trusty weapon and defend it through another volume; but truth, unalterable truth forbids the rash attempt, and what is more imperious still, a phantom, hideous, huge and black, forever haunts my mind, the direful

spectrum of my landlord's bill—which like a carrion crow hovers around my slow expiring history, impatient of its death, to gorge upon its carcass.

Suffice it then in brevity to say, that within three hours after the surrender, a legion of British beef fed warriors poured into New Amsterdam, taking possession of the fort and batteries. And now might be heard the busy sound of hammers made by the old Dutch burghers, who industriously nailed up their doors and windows to protect their vrouws from these fierce barbarians; whom they contemplated in silent sullenness from the attic story, as they paraded through the streets.

Thus did Col. Richard Nichols, the commander of the British force enter into quiet possession of the conquered realm as *locum tenant* for the duke of York. The victory was attended with no other outrage than that of changing the name of the province and its metropolis, which thenceforth were denominated NEW YORK, and so have continued to be called unto the present day. The inhabitants according to treaty were allowed to maintain quiet possession of their property, but so inveterately did they retain their abhorrence to the British nation, that in a private meeting of the leading citizens, it was unanimously determined never to ask any of their conquerors to dinner.

Such was the fate of the renowned province of New Netherlands, and it formed but one link

in a subtle chain of events, originating at the capture of Fort Casimer, which has produced the present convulsions of the globe!—Let not this assertion excite a smile of incredulity, for extravagant as it may seem, there is nothing admits of more conclusive proof—Attend then gentle reader to this plain deduction, which if thou are a king, an emperor, or other powerful potentate, I advise thee to treasure up in thy heart—though little expectation have I that my work will fall into such hands, for well I know the care of crafty ministers, to keep all grave and edifying books of the kind out of the way of unhappy monarchs—lest peradventure they should read them and learn wisdom.

By the treacherous surprisal of Fort Casimer, then, did the crafty Swedes enjoy a transient triumph; but drew upon their heads the vengeance of Peter Stuyvesant, who wrested all New Sweden from their hands—By the conquest of New Sweden Peter Stuyvesant aroused the claims of Lord Baltimore, who appealed to the cabinet of Great Britain, who subdued the whole province of New Netherlands—By this great achievement the whole extent of North America from Nova Scotia to the Floridas, was rendered one entire dependency upon the British crown—but mark the consequence—The hitherto scattered colonies being thus consolidated, and having no rival colonies to check or keep them in awe, waxed great and powerful,

and finally becoming too strong for the mother country, were enabled to shake off its bonds, and by a glorious revolution became an independent empire.—But the chain of effects stopped not here; the successful revolution in America produced the sanguinary revolution in France, which produced the puissant Buonaparte who produced the French Despotism, which has thrown the whole world in confusion!—Thus have these great powers been successively punished for their ill-starred conquests—and thus, as I asserted, have all the present convulsions, revolutions and disasters that overwhelm mankind, originated in the capture of little Fort Casimer, as recorded in this eventful history.

Let then the potentates of Europe, beware how they meddle with our beloved country. If the surprisal of a comparatively insignificant fort has overturned the economy of empires, what (reasoning from analogy) would be the effect of conquering a vast republic?—It would set all the stars and planets by the ears—the moon would go to logger-heads with the sun—the whole system of nature would be hurled into chaos—unless it was providentially rescued by the Millenium!

CHAP. X.

Containing the dignified retirement, and mortal surrender of Peter the Headstrong.

THUS then have I concluded this renowned historical enterprize; but before I lay aside my weary pen, there yet remains to be performed one pious duty. If among the incredible host of readers that shall peruse this book, there should haply be found any of those souls of true nobility, which glow with celestial fire, at the history of the generous and the brave, they will doubtless be anxious to know the fate of the gallant Peter Stuyvesant. To gratify one such sterling heart of gold I would go more lengths, than to instruct the cold blooded curiosity of a whole fraternity of philosophers.

No sooner had that high mettled cavalier signed the articles of capitulation than, determined not to witness the humiliation of his favourite city, he turned his back upon its walls and made a growling retreat to his *Bouwery*, or country seat, which was situated about two miles off, where he passed the remainder of his days in patriarchal retirement. There he enjoyed that tranquillity of mind, which he had never known amid the distracting cares of government, and tasted the sweets of absolute and uncontrouled authority, which his

factious subjects had so often dashed with the bitterness of opposition.

No persuasions could ever induce him to revisit the city—on the contrary he would always have his great arm chair placed with its back to the windows, which looked in that direction ; until a thick grove of trees planted by his own hand grew up and formed a screen, that effectually excluded it from the prospect. He railed continually at the degenerate innovations and improvements introduced by the conquerors—forbade a word of their detested language to be spoken in his family, a prohibition readily obeyed, since none of the household could speak any thing but dutch—and even ordered a fine avenue to be cut down in front of his house, because it consisted of English cherry trees.

The same incessant vigilance, that blazed forth when he had a vast province under his care, now shewed itself with equal vigour, though in narrower limits. He patrolled with unceasing watchfulness around the boundaries of his little territory ; repelled every encroachment with intrepid promptness ; punished every vagrant depredation upon his orchard or his farm yard with inflexible severity—and conducted every stray hog or cow in triumph to the pound. But to the indigent neighbour, the friendless stranger, or the weary wanderer, his spacious door was ever open, and his capacious fire place, that emblem of his own warm and generous

heart, had always a corner to receive and cherish them. There was an exception to this, I must confess, in case the ill starred applicant was an Englishman or a Yankee, to whom, though he might extend the hand of assistance, he could never be brought to yield the rites of hospitality. Nay, if peradventure some straggling merchant of the east, should stop at his door with his cart load of tin ware or wooden bowls, the fiery Peter would issue forth like a giant from his castle, and make such a furious clattering among his pots and kettles, that the vender of "*notions*" was fain to betake himself to instant flight.

His ancient suit of regimentals, worn threadbare by the brush, were carefully hung up in the state bed chamber, and regularly aired the first fair day of every month—and his cocked hat and trusty sword, were suspended in grim repose, over the parlour mantle-piece, forming supporters to a full length portrait of the renowned admiral Von Tromp. In his domestic empire he maintained strict discipline, and a well organized, despotic government; but though his own will was the supreme law, yet the good of his subjects was his constant object. He watched over, not merely, their immediate comforts, but their morals, and their ultimate welfare; for he gave them abundance of excellent admonition, nor could any of them complain, that when occasion required, he was by any

means niggardly in bestowing wholesome correction.

The good old Dutch festivals, those periodical demonstrations of an overflowing heart and a thankful spirit, which are falling into sad disuse among my fellow citizens, were faithfully observed in the mansion of governor Stuyvesant. New year was truly a day of open handed liberality, of jocund revelry, and warm hearted congratulation—when the bosom seemed to swell with genial good-fellowship—and the plenteous table, was attended with an unceremonious freedom, and honest broad mouthed merriment, unknown in these days of degeneracy and refinement. Paas and Pinxter were scrupulously observed throughout his dominions; nor was the day of St. Nicholas suffered to pass by, without making presents, hanging the stocking in the chimney, and complying with all its other ceremonies.

Once a year, on the first day of April, he used to array himself in full regimentals, being the anniversary of his triumphal entry into New Amsterdam, after the conquest of New Sweden. This was always a kind of saturnalia among the domestics, when they considered themselves at liberty in some measure, to say and do what they pleased; for on this day their master was always observed to unbend, and become exceeding pleasant and jocose, sending the old greyheaded negroes on April fools errands for pigeons milk; not one of whom but al-

lowed himself to be taken in, and humoured his old master's jokes; as became a faithful and well disciplined dependant. Thus did he reign, happily and peacefully on his own land—injuring no man—envying no man—molested by no outward strifes; perplexed by no internal commotions—and the mighty monarchs of the earth, who were vainly seeking to maintain peace, and promote the welfare of mankind, by war and desolation, would have done well to have made a voyage to the little island of Manna-hata, and learned a lesson in government, from the domestic economy of Peter Stuyvesant.

In process of time, however, the old governor, like all other children of mortality, began to exhibit evident tokens of decay. Like an aged oak, which though it long has braved the fury of the elements, and still retains its gigantic proportions, yet begins to shake and groan with every blast—so the gallant Peter, though he still bore the port and semblance of what he was, in the days of his hardihood and chivalry, yet did age and infirmity begin to sap the vigour of his frame—but his heart, that most unconquerable citadel, still triumphed unsubdued. With matchless avidity, would he listen to every article of intelligence, concerning the battles between the English and Dutch—Still would his pulse beat high, whenever he heard of the victories of De Ruyter—and his countenance lower, and his eye brows knit, when fortune turned

in favour of the English. At length, as on a certain day, he had just smoked his fifth pipe, and was napping after dinner, in his arm chair, conquering the whole British nation in his dreams, he was suddenly aroused by a most fearful ringing of bells, rattling of drums, and roaring of cannon, that put all his blood in a ferment. But when he learnt, that these rejoicings were in honour of a great victory obtained by the combined English and French fleets, over the brave De Ruyter, and the younger Von Tromp, it went so much to his heart, that he took to his bed, and in less than three days, was brought to death's door, by a violent cholera morbus! But even in this extremity, he still displayed the unconquerable spirit of *Peter the Headstrong*; holding out, to the last gasp, with most inflexible obstinacy, against a whole army of old women, who were bent upon driving the enemy out of his bowels, after a true Dutch mode of defence, by inundating the seat of war, with catnip and penny royal.

While he thus lay, lingering on the verge of dissolution; news was brought him, that the brave De Ruyter, had suffered but little loss—had made good his retreat—and meant once more to meet the enemy in battle. The closing eye of the old warrior kindled at the words—he partly raised himself in bed—a flash of martial fire beamed across his visage—he clinched his withered hand, as if he felt within his gripe that sword which waved

in triumph before the walls of Fort Christina, and giving a grim smile of exultation, sunk back upon his pillow, and expired.

Thus died Peter Stuyvesant, a valiant soldier—a loyal subject—an upright governor, and an honest Dutchman—who wanted only a few empires to desolate, to have been immortalized as a hero!

His funeral obsequies were celebrated with the utmost grandeur and solemnity. The town was perfectly emptied of its inhabitants, who crowded in throngs to pay the last sad honours to their good old governor. All his sterling qualities rushed in full tide upon their recollections, while the memory of his foibles, and his faults, had expired with him. The ancient burghers contended who should have the privilege of bearing the pall; the populace strove who should walk nearest to the bier—and the melancholy procession was closed by a number of grey headed negroes, who had wintered and summered in the household of their departed master, for the greater part of a century.

With sad and gloomy countenances the multitude gathered round the grave. They dwelt with mournful hearts, on the sturdy virtues, the signal services and the gallant exploits of the brave old veteran. They recalled with secret upbraidings, their own factious oppositions to his government—and many an ancient burgher, whose phlegmatic

features had never been known to relax, nor his eyes to moisten—was now observed to puff a pensive pipe, and the big drop to steal down his cheek—while he muttered with affectionate accent and melancholy shake of the head—"Well den—Hardkoppig Piet ben gone at last!"

His remains were deposited in the family vault, under a chapel, which he had piously erected on his estate and dedicated to St. Nicholas—and which stood on the identical spot at present occupied by St. Mark's church, where his tomb stone is still to be seen. His estate, or *Bouwery*, as it was called, has ever continued in the possession of his descendants, who by the uniform integrity of their conduct, and their strict adherence to the customs and manners that prevailed in the *good old times*, have proved themselves worthy of their illustrious ancestor. Many a time and oft, has the farm been haunted at night by enterprizing money-diggers, in quest of pots of gold, said to have been buried by the old governor—though I cannot learn that any of them have ever been enriched by their researches—and who is there, among my native born fellow citizens, that does not remember, when in the mischievous days of his boyhood, he conceived it a great exploit, to rob "Stuyvesant's orchard" on a holliday afternoon.

At this strong hold of the family may still be seen certain memorials of the immortal Peter. His

full length portrait frowns in martial terrors from the parlour wall—his cocked hat and sword still hang up in the best bed room.—His brimstone coloured breeches were for a long while suspended in the hall, until some years since they occasioned a dispute between a new married couple—and his silver mounted wooden leg is still treasured up in the store room as an invaluable relique.

And now worthy reader, ere I take a sad farewell—which alas ! must be forever—willingly would I part in cordial fellowship, and bespeak thy kind hearted remembrance. That I have not written a better history of the days of the patriarchs is not my fault—had any other person written one, as good I should not have attempted it at all.—That many will hereafter spring up and surpass me in excellence, I have very little doubt, and still less care ; well knowing, that when the great Christovallo Colon (who is vulgarly called Columbus) had once stood his egg upon its end, every one at table could stand his up a thousand times more dexterously.—Should any reader find matter of offence in this history, I should heartily grieve, though I would on no account question his penetration by telling him he is mistaken—his good nature by telling him he is captious—or his pure conscience by telling him he is startled at a shadow.—Surely if he is so ingenious

in finding offence where none is intended, it were a thousand pities he should not be suffered to enjoy the benefit of his discovery.

I have too high an opinion of the understanding of my fellow citizens, to think of yielding them any instruction, and I covet too much their good will, to forfeit it by giving them good advice. I am none of those cynics who despise the world, because it despises them—on the contrary, though but low in its regard I look up to it with the most perfect good nature, and my only sorrow is, that it does not prove itself worthy of the unbounded love I bear it.

If however in this my historic production—the scanty fruit of a long and laborious life—I have failed to gratify the dainty palate of the age, I can only lament my misfortune—for it is too late in the season for me even to hope to repair it. Already has withering age showered his sterile snows upon my brow; in a little while, and this genial warmth which still lingers around my heart, and throbs—worthy reader—throbs kindly towards thyself, shall be chilled forever. Haply this frail compound of dust, which while alive may have given birth to naught but unprofitable weeds, may form a humble sod of the valley, from whence shall spring many a sweet wild flower, to adorn my beloved island of Manna-hata!

FINIS.

**DOES NOT
CIRCULATE**

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CIRCULATE**

